DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 469 751 TM 034 542

AUTHOR	Danzig, Arnold; Wright, William
TITLE	Science versus Service: Narrative and Story-Based Professional Development with School Administrators at a County Regional School District.
PUB DATE	2002-04-00
NOTE	107p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (New Orleans, LA, April 1-5, 2002).
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research (143) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01/PC05 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Elementary Secondary Education; Experience; *Faculty Development; High Risk Students; Life Events; Personal Narratives; Principals; Superintendents; *Teachers

ABSTRACT

This paper describes a professional development approach using narrative and study. During the 2000-2001 school year, researchers worked with the leadership team (13 educators) of a county accommodation school district in a major urban center in the southwestern United States. The general goal of professional development was to assist the leadership team in accomplishing high quality work while paying attention to the underlying moral purposes of their work at an accommodation school district that serves homeless children, incarcerated children, and children who have been unsuccessful in their prior school experiences. The approach asked education leaders to explore their own stories, their workplace experiences, and professional dilemmas as they crafted stories of practice. Three general assumptions about professional development guided the project: (1) to respect the intellectual capacity of school administrators and others in the school district; (2) to focus on building competence with attention to individual and organizational leadership; and (3) to promote continuous inquiry and school betterment that are embedded in the daily practice of schools. Outcomes of this work were the stories that participants produced, the discussions that followed, and the applications to other tasks/responsibilities of the leadership team. Seven such stories are attached. (Contains 4 tables and 27 references.) (SLD)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

TM

ED 469 751

Science versus Service: Narrative and Story-Based Professional Development with School Administrators at a County Regional School District

Arnold Danzig, Arizona State University

William Wright, Northern Arizona University

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

A. Danzig

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

TM034542

Paper Presented At Session 56.17 New Models Of Professional Development For Learner-Centered Leadership (Division A — Symposium) At The Annual Meeting of The American Educational Research Association, April 1-5, 2001
New Orleans, Louisiana

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Science versus Service: Narrative and Story-Based Professional Development with School Administrators at a County Regional School District

Arnold Danzig, Arizona State University
William Wright, Northern Arizona University

Abstract

This paper describes a professional development approach using narrative and story. During the 2000-2001 school year, the authors worked with the leadership team from a county accommodation school district in a major urban center in the southwestern United States. The general goal of professional development was to assist the leadership team in accomplishing high quality work while paying attention to the underlying moral purposes of their work at an accommodation school district which serves homeless children, incarcerated children, and children who have been unsuccessful in their prior school experiences. The approach asked education leaders to explore their own stories, their workplace experiences and professional dilemmas, as they crafted stories of practice. Three general assumptions about professional development guided the project: (1) to respect the intellectual capacity of school administrators and others in the school district, (2) to focus on building competence with attention to individual and organizational leadership, and (3) to promote continuous inquiry and school betterment that are embedded in the daily practices of schools.

Introduction

This study of professional development with school and district administrators describes the authors' experiences working with the administrative team of a county regional school district in a major urban center in the southwest United States. The county regional school district is a public school district governed by a political official

elected by popular vote for a four-year term. Typically, the post is considered to be a stepping-stone to a higher appointed or elected position, and one in which political considerations are dominant. An appointed district superintendent of schools manages daily operations. The district's average daily membership (ADM) is approximately 1500 students, and there are seven school sites, including separate school sites elementary, middle, and high school students, schools targeted for homeless students, niche schools for at-risk students, and site-based educational services for incarcerated youth.

The project began in the summer of 2000. The scope of our work was to provide expertise and consultant services in areas related to research, evaluation, and training for district administrators through ongoing professional development. The authors met weekly with the leadership team of the district beginning in early September 2000 and continuing through June 2001. The leadership team of the district included the following central office and school site administrators:

District superintendent (1)
School principals (4)
Assistant principals, and site directors (4)
Director of curriculum for the district (1)
Director of business services for the district (1)
Director of personnel for the district (1)
Director of computer services for the district (1)

The researchers met with this group every Monday for approximately three hours. Site visits, conversations with individual administrators, the County Superintendent, and others, occurred along with these scheduled sessions/meetings.

Professional Development and Making Schools Better

From the outset, our sessions tried to balance specific needs voiced by the leadership team with a larger and more general goal of school and district betterment.

In early sessions, the leadership team expressed need for help with tasks such as: 1) long range planning for the district and individual sites, 2) revising and updating District and Board policy, 3) assessing and revising curricula, 4) strategizing ways to improve student, school, and district test performance, 5) preparing school and site evaluation plans, 6) developing professional improvement plans. Each of these areas involved reading, discussions, and guided practice with the leadership team. As outside consultants, we listened to what the team felt was needed and then devised some strategies to address these needs. We presented information, designed simulations, synthesized reading, shared experiences, shared assessment models and boilerplates, suggested areas for future consideration and action research.

More pressing concerns and immediate interests sometimes interrupted planned activities. A visit from the crew of *60 Minutes* television show occurred during the school year, and the subsequent buzz over how it would play out, and then the actual showing of the story on television, dominated at least one or two meetings. District and site administrators were interrupted by calls regarding missing children, transportation issues, fights on campus, etc. These interruptions often became part of the deliberate discussions and activities of future sessions. They provide a backdrop for understanding that professional development is embedded in ongoing administrative practice with responsibilities that captures time, attention, and energy of school administrators.

When talking about school reform or school improvement, we prefer the term that Oakes et al. (2000) introduces, *betterment*. Betterment implies more than reforming schools and school leadership, and instead looks more to how the norms of practice must change in order for something new or different to occur. The goal of betterment requires

recognition of the cultural contradictions that keep schools from changing. Oakes et al. (2000), identifies four norms of practice related to betterment: 1) an **educative** norm related to inquiry and reflection in schools, 2) a **social justice** norm related to reaching across ethnic and class boundaries, 3) a **caring** norm related to balancing of political power & social inclusion, and 4) a **participatory** norm with a goal of connecting administrators, teachers, parents through democratic work life and participation. Betterment implies a positive passion towards the public good (Oakes et al., 2000, pp. 311-312).

Perspective: What Narrative Offers to Professional Development of School Leaders

Many writers have considered the importance of narrative to learning. Narrative or story form enhances the opportunity for human learning (Bruner, 1996; Gardner, 1996), for building competence (Danzig and Harris, 1996), for understanding tacit knowledge associated with professional practice (Clandinin and Connelly, 1991; Schön, 1991), for understanding the organizations and institutional identity (Schön, 1991; Czarniawska, 1997) and for understanding leadership (Bennis, 2000; Danzig 2001), and for professional growth based on a moral basis for understanding professional practice (Coles, 1989; Clandinin and Connelly, 1991; Cooper, 1995; Danzig, 1999a; 1999b).

In general, listening, telling, crafting, and analyzing stories of personal experiences and professional practices were seen as ways for educational leaders to:

(1) demonstrate the power of personal biography and history to understanding organizational leadership roles,
(2) delineate multiple perspectives people bring to the workplace and to identify some of their social and cultural influences, and
(3) experience a model of knowledge construction, with understandings that could be applied in other settings with teachers, parents, and students.

The products or outcomes of the work were the stories that the participants produced, the group discussions that followed, and the applications to other tasks/responsibilities of the leadership team. Events also occurred during the year which were unanticipated, such as the non-renewal of the superintendent contract, which may not have been directly related to the project, but did affect the climate of the district in general, and how our work was perceived.

Leadership journeys. In recent years, many books have been written in which leaders tell the story of their journey into leadership and the lessons learned from their experiences (De Pree, 1989; 1993; Jaworski, 1996; Welch, 1998). Some of these biographies and autobiographies find their way into reading lists for courses and programs in leadership in education, business, political science (for an excellent bibliography and reading list on leadership biographies, see English, 1995). Life and career experiences of leaders are presented as an entry route to understanding the key values expressed by leaders, and the central vision that they operationalize in their organizations. Bennis' (1994) interviews with leaders from business, government, and non-profit sectors build the case that successful leaders use their positions to "express themselves." For Bennis, leadership is loosely defined as the ability to articulate a vision and provide opportunities to express and build commitment to the vision (1994). De Pree (1989; 1993) writes more autobiographically. He focuses on the value commitments of his father, and how his own experiences growing up shaped his business philosophy and ultimately the organization's values and mission.

Gardner (1995) focuses more on the cognitive aspects of leadership and suggests that leaders communicate key values to followers through stories, stories that resonate

with followers. Drawing on the biographies of some of the major figures of the 20th century (e.g., Robert Oppenheimer, George Marshall, Margaret Mead, Ghandi, Martin Luther King Jr., Pope John XXIII) Gardner suggests that leaders operationalize their ideals and everyday practice through stories. Over time and with experience, underlying values are deepened, extended, and communicated on a larger stage to a larger audience. Gardner's stories cover leadership in different domains including higher education, business, government, politics, religion, and popular culture, and are played out in local, national, and international settings.

Both Bennis (1994) and Gardner (1995) view leadership as something learned rather than something innate. Leaders are described as having developed cognitive skills and dispositions in youth that are practiced and honed on a smaller stage during an early part of their lives, and later communicated through stories. Public speaking, writing, negotiating, dealing with conflict, strategizing, and managing relations with authority are a few of the cognitive skills developed, learned, and practiced.

Reflective and unreflective stories. One criticism of the narrative form is that is "inherently uncritical, partaking of a script composed elsewhere, by others, with the purpose of maintaining the maldistributions of power within the larger culture" (Barone, 2001, p. 169, citing Goodson, 1995). Stories that are not subject to questioning and scrutiny risk presenting an uncritical account of personal and professional experiences that fail to recognize the structures of power and privilege present in the story. These criticisms imply that analysis and interpretation of story and events are important components of experiencing a narrative. Story discussions and analysis provide opportunity to scrutinize multiple themes related to power, culture, class, race, and

gender, which are part of the story. Without analysis and reflection, important elements of the story are likely to go unnoticed, and important actions or possibilities missed.

Goodson's caution points to a need for sharing stories with others and hearing multiple interpretations and meanings of stories. Schön (1991) refers to this reframing of experience as the *reflective turn*, the moment where inquirers explicitly look inward, look at themselves engaged in the action, in order to understand how biography and experience contribute to which questions are asked, what perspectives are noticed, valued, and/or disputed. Reflection allows for a reconstruction of events in which embedded values, overlooked consequences, alternative meanings and interpretations are made explicit. Discussing an actual story provides the opportunity to reflect-on-actions, and to reframe one's understanding of actions and decisions.

The extent of reflection and reframing of events is affected by multiple factors: 1) How detailed is the narrative? Does it include details of decisions, motives, actions, and behaviors? 2) How safe is the environment? Are individuals and the group willing to confront major issues and values in the stories? Are they willing or able to express views which are critical or unflattering? Stories that include greater details about experiences and actions allow for greater scrutiny. Stories that detail hardship and resilience, relationships with others (parents, siblings, and peers), experiences in school, experiences with authority, entry into the leadership domain, provide a pathway to consider leadership and the development process. One hoped for outcome of group discussion is that the values and assumptions of both teller and listener will become more explicit. This is not so different that what Senge et al. (1990; 1999) calls "surfacing mental models," to bring to the surface some of the underlying concerns, expectations,

and values that people use to make decisions and take actions. This inquiry was seen as a central part of the story process as well as central to the study and practice of leadership.

Tacit knowledge and practical know-how embedded in the stories of leadership. Stories provide a basis for understanding how people think and act in the world, of how expertise is gained in the real world. Stories allow practitioners to consider and inspect the informal systems in the workplace, which exist, side-by-side with the more formal systems, which are used to define expertise and practice. Stories provide an opportunity for practitioners to share their experiences. Stories are a way for practitioners to move from superficial to deeper issues embedded in practice; they allow professionals to identify some of the difference between how they might have constructed a problem and how other practitioners constructed the situation. The story leads both novices and experienced practitioners to consider their own choices in what to select as important and what is peripheral to the story. A good story permits the listener to examine her own filters, or biases, in order to reach a more complete understanding of what is important to the story. The story elicits reflection on how problems are defined, specific situations are handled, and actions are taken. Stories encourage the sharing of knowledge, from expert to novice, as both reflect on the strengths and limits of experience (Danzig, 1999a; 1999b; Barone, 2001).

Methodological Considerations in the Crafting Stories of Practice

The methodology for writing and analyzing stories of practices involved multiple steps. Participants read and analyzed education-related stories and narratives of others. They worked in pairs to collect and craft each other's stories. Interviews among team members were taped, transcribed, and crafted into accounts or stories of self, with

consideration for how personal background, experience, and training contributed to administrative practice. The stories often led to larger conversations about the motivations and commitments of school leaders, teaching and learning processes, professional commitments and administrative standards, and testing and curricular standards.

Data sources. The leadership stories were constructed during the year by the researchers and leadership team. Each participant was given a list of suggested questions to begin the interviews and guidelines for what the final story should look like. (For details and examples of see Danzig and Harris, 1996; Danzig, 1997a, Danzig 1997b, Danzig, 1999a, Danzig 1999b.) The administrators were invited to talk about their own personal biographies and entry into their respective fields. In a subsequent interview, the leaders were invited to talk about a specific problem or situation in which they had played a leadership role. The problem was to be discrete rather than ongoing, and involve others inside and outside their respective organizations. The resolution, if any, was also to be discussed. All interviews were audio taped and transcribed into written text.

The first step involved dividing the group into pairs with each person telling his or her story to another person. This verbal telling is audio-taped, transcribed, and returned to the original listener. Step two required the listener to take the transcription and craft the conversation into a more sequenced story, removing the prompts, hesitations, and sidebars. The story itself included two parts: 1) a general biographical background of the administrator up to and including discussion of his or her current leadership position; 2) a detailed discussion of a problem or situation at work in which the leader was asked to

play a leadership role —handling of a problem or an issue at work, discussion of outcomes, and reflection on what might be done differently next time.

The end product was to be 2000-3000-word leadership story, using the actual words of the interviewee. The participants then reviewed the draft story to ensure accuracy and to provide an opportunity for editing.

The final step was the presentation of the story. Written copies of the story were passed out to all members of the group. The stories were read aloud, usually by the crafter but sometimes by the person whose story was being told. Discussion of story themes, story dilemmas, problems inherent in the story, leadership themes, recipes for actions, and multiple strategies and considerations were all part of the conversations that ensued.

The initial conversation or telling of the story provided opportunities for both the storyteller and listener to reflect on the experience. Listener and teller inevitably raised different questions and concerns, as both become more aware of what is important about the story. The listener then crafted the conversation into a story form. Crafting the story from transcripts required the story crafter to at least think about how someone else's experiences compared with his or her own experiences, how the situation might have been handled similarly or differently, and how the options possible compared with happened or is described as having happened.

These conversations articulated the desire to define, create and sustain child- and learner-centered schools, schools which takes children from whatever their starting point, SES, or ability range, and move them towards finding meaning in their lives and achieving greater independence. The professional development activities also involved

discussion and exercises related to the District's vision and mission, long range planning, District policy and updating of the policy manual, school improvement plans, personnel and curricular issues.

Self-Disclosure - The Researchers' Stories

As part of the yearlong professional development, we told and crafted our own narratives of experience. Wright had been a superintendent and draws on his experiences as coach and school administrator. Danzig had been a teacher, administrator, and college professor; his story presents a few of the dilemmas faced in finding services for a chronically ill child. A brief excerpt from each of their stories is presented below with more complete stories presented later in the paper.

Wright's story. Wright's story relates his own experiences growing up. He presents the story of someone growing up without a father, who challenges authority and fights for the underdog. His first jobs as teacher and coach in rural and urban settings raise questions about who goes unserved by the system and why. His movement into school administration is almost immediate and as principal and then superintendent, he reflects on the dilemma raised by a strong work ethic and personal belief in hard work and the recognition that some children just don't fit the school or system and unless the system becomes more flexible, these children fail and drop out. He recalls:

> *So, I remember thinking that I'm the guy that believes in self-help. Here I was the guy that believed that if you want something out of this life, you've got to work hard to get, because that's the way I grew up. Do what's right and be responsible for your own success. So now, I was arguing for is let's make it easier and I was being told. "You're trying to give things away". I did not want to give things away, rather wanted to come up with some kind of a program where every kid could at least get*

> *a high school diploma. We weren't very sophisticated in those days, but I felt I was talking something about important. I was talking about making adjustments for kids that can't adjust. So, out of that whole discussion came, I think, came a philosophy that said* ***we're going to work with every child****. In spite of the fact that almost everybody says they believe in it, almost nobody did anything about it.*

Wright describes his own evolution and recognition that school betterment requires changes to the deeply held and personal beliefs of individual teachers and administrators about children, curriculum, testing, and what it means to be educated. Self-scrutiny is a pre-requisite to developing competence, as learner, teacher or administrator. Professional development is also enhanced through guided practice and reflection.

Danzig's story. Danzig's story highlights dilemmas of balancing professional responsibilities and family life. Danzig's experiences as a teacher, administrator, and college professor are informed by not only his education and professional experiences, but also his experiences as a parent raising four children and negotiating for services for a profoundly handicapped daughter. Danzig's story brings the personal into the professional realm, by exploring how his learning as a parent becomes part of his teaching, research, and service. Having to negotiate complex arrangements and boundaries among public and private schools, social service agencies, medical and long term care provides Danzig with first hand experience making decisions about the educational, social, psychological, medical, legal services. Danzig's evolution is from a naive college student being surprised at how newspaper reports of student protest differ from 1st hand accounts, to recognition of the human and institutional barriers that prevent

services from being provided. Danzig also reframes professional development in ways that professionals, individually and collectively, learn to change themselves.

> *We went through lots of administrative hearings to get services, and sometimes, we'd leave those administrative hearings where people were telling us what was best for one of our children, and we would cry in frustration. As you walked out, you would have to tell yourself to absolutely not listen to the words or accept the recommendations. You quickly learn that it is almost impossible to change the ways others define situations. Sometimes it is personal, "we don't want to do it your way." Other times it is system driven, "we don't have the resources to do it your way." So you leave, you seek out new organizations and providers to get help, to provide services. When you go against the recommendations of professionals who are part of a system of providers, you realize pretty quickly that you have to leave, find other systems, because the system will work against you. Consciously or not, the system wants to take credit for its successes and blames others for its failures. And once you go against institutional norms, the system has someone to blame.*
>
> *At particular points we had to make decisions about our children even though we didn't have enough information to make the right decision. You learn to make decisions, on limited knowledge. You look for people who seem to understand; who take for granted that what it is that you are looking for is best. Conventional wisdom does not take you to the right place. Conventional wisdom is block because it looks for solutions or answers to situations that can't be solved. But you still must do something, even though it may not be the best thing. Doing nothing sends a message that nothing can be done. If it's a wrong decision, change the wrong decision, but keep moving.* (Appendix B – Danzig Story)

Although they come from different places, Wright and Danzig's stories adopt a similar perspective, which elevates the personal over the organizational, which see individual integrity and responsibility as pre-requisites for institutional commitment and betterment.

Balancing Theory and Practice

The narratives and conversations that we engaged in during the year were part of larger conversations concerning how to make the schools and district better. These conversations included discussions and understanding of:

- effective school leadership;

- cultural, social, and legal contexts of schools and schooling;
- effective communications;
- curriculum and instruction;
- diversity and at-risk student populations;

Empirical content and leadership practices. As professors, we are part of a culture that is committed to studying about leadership and critiquing this literature on leadership and leadership development. We also recognized that the members of the group were practicing school administrators with ongoing responsibilities for departments, school sites, evaluation of instruction, campus safety, etc. So, we at least tried to balance our need for deeper understanding of issues and dilemmas with the need for solving real problems needed to get the job done. We tried to model professional inquiry in our understandings, assumptions and comments to the readings, cases, and real-world practices.

Readings about leadership theory were discussed at the same time as specific actions and activities were accomplished by the leadership team which included:

- writing and adopting a focused statement on the purposes, goals, vision of the school district;
- updating the district policy manual so that policy matched actual practices;
- developing department and school site plans for productivity and accountability;

The approach was to balance thoughtful reading with actions. Sometimes these activities clicked with the group and other times they were extended exercises that led to much time being spent with no obvious outcome.

Developing a vision and mission for the district. In theory, reaching agreement and then writing a vision and mission for a school district that serves a population of students who are at-risk by virtue of poverty, homelessness, and incarceration, would seem to be routine. However, there were deep divides, culturally and educationally, among the administrative team. The differences among the participants were often expressed in general terms with some individuals expressing a generalized concern for child-centered approaches and seeing good teaching and instruction as the core responsibility of schools while others favored more structure and/or control strategies as ways to help children and facilitate learning. The discussions presented a range of tensions among the team concerning control over children, contradiction over the curriculum, knowledge, and ways of knowing and learning, and societal dilemmas about the relationship of schooling equality, justice, and social relations between ages, sexes, and ethnic groups. While opposing views are not necessarily mutually exclusive, we tried to frame these differences in educational approaches and priorities in what Berlak and Berlak (1981) refer to as a dilemma language, "a language of inquiry for describing schooling and exploring systematically the origins and consequences of the schooling process upon children, and its contribution to social and cultural reproduction and change" (p. 135). The goal of these discussions was to surface these differences and recognize how they shape positions and stance, and to build an appreciation of how these differences result in different perceptions and priorities. This led into efforts to agree upon and write a district vision, mission, and set goals for the district, schools, and departments.

Bennis (1994, 2001) suggests that leaders help organizations develop a shared vision, a goal to work towards. Developing a vision, mission, and goals are also part of a more general goal of presenting a common set of leadership principles. Bennis (2001) reports that leaders of great groups share four common characteristics (p. 140):

- *provide direction and meaning;*
- *generate and sustain trust*
- *display a bias toward action, risk taking, and curiosity,*
- *are purveyors of hope*

Working on a collective vision, mission, and goals also supports the view that organizations should focus on group development as well as individual development (Bennis, 2001, pp. 140-141).

The leadership team also read and discussed the work of Senge (1990). Senge identifies three new roles and skills for leaders, which he identifies as "designers, teachers, and stewards. These roles require new skills: the ability to build shared vision, to bring to the surface and challenge prevailing mental models, and to foster more systemic patterns of thinking" (p. 9). Building a shared vision is described as encouraging personal vision, learning to communicate and ask for support, and blending of intrinsic and extrinsic vision. Leadership is described less as individual behavior and more as ability to marshal collaboration that is necessary for a group to grow.

After much discussion, the leadership team moved on with the task of writing a vision, mission, and goals. The hope was to create, revise, adopt, and commit to a vision, mission, and goals which could then be applied across departments, schools sites, and district wide. Three sub-groups formed and produced a draft as illustrated in Table 2. While there was overlap, there was no consensus among the sub-groups.

Table 1

Vision, Mission, and Goal Statements for CRSD District (October, 2000 Draft)

Group I

Vision — To enrich the lives of students through learning experiences.
Mission -- To create an education with no limits to the educational experience.
Goals— All students will perform at or above grade level in every classroom.

Group II

Vision — To enrich the lives of students where education can rekindle their spirit and create a new vision in partnership within their school community.
Mission—CRSD District is committed to recovering and preparing at-risk students to become self-directed learners.
Goals— Promote academic excellence, create and maintain a safe haven, improve communication, improve parental and community partnerships.

Group III

Vision — To enrich the lives of students through educational opportunities and life experiences.
Mission— To create a nationally recognized educational program, which is academically appropriate and challenging in an emotionally, physically and socially safe environment.
Goals— All students attending CRSD District will perform at or above grade level in every classroom to become productive and contributing members of society.

Out of the drafts came a 4th version of the mission, vision, and goals statements.

However, while seen as an improvement by some, others felt it moved the District in

directions in which there was no common agreement.

Table 2

Vision, Mission, and Goal Statements for CRSD District (Revised, November 2000)

Vision — To enrich the lives of students through education.

Mission— To provide a caring atmosphere for students from a variety of circumstances that recognizes and encourages individual worth and differences while promoting personal growth and responsibility.

Goal — All students attending CRSD District will make academic and social progress in all classes.

These discussions allowed the leadership team to voice individual beliefs as part of developing vision, mission, and goals for the district. This was also an opportunity to scrutinize some of the educational values and dilemmas of educational practice that were part of the administrative team In Weick's (1979) terms, goals are better thought of as tools for making sense of organizational action.

> Organizational actions at best seem to be goal-interpreted. Goals are sufficiently diverse, the future is sufficiently uncertain, and the actions on which goal statements could center are sufficiently unclear, that goal statements explain a relatively small portion of the variance in action. It is probably that goals are tied more closely to actual activities than is commonly recognized and that they are more productively understood as summaries of previous actions (Weick, 1979, p. 239, cited in Clark et. al, 1994).

In this view, goals are less about what comes next, and more a reflection of what has come before. For the leadership team, it was difficult to agree upon a vision, mission, and goals for the district, and also to manage the reality that agreement did not automatically mean that these goals could be accomplished.

To move forward the discussion of short-term goals and long range plans, Wright suggested that we do a force field analysis (Lewin, 1951) which required the group to draw up a list of driving forces and restraining factors related to change in the district. In a follow-up session, the group weighted or prioritized their list. Naming and labeling these factors and forces provided greater visibility to the things that the administrative team believed. It also provided an opportunity to identify one's values and beliefs in a setting that might be seen as safer for group member to speak freely and share information. The exercise laid groundwork for the subsequent writing, discussion,

analysis, and interpretation of the stories. Table 4 provides a summary of factors and forces listed and prioritized by the team.

Table 3

Force Field Analysis Related to Change (Partial Listing)

Restraining Factors	Driving Forces
Reading	Student Readiness
Attendance	On-task Behavior
Home-Community	Teacher Unity
Test Anxiety	Student Needs
Budget	Bloom's Taxonomy
Prior Performance	Merit Pay
Health of Students	Commitment
Home-Community Connection	Life Long Learning
Test Anxiety	TQM
Budget	Teacher Preparation
Test Anxiety	Teacher Character
Budget	Teacher Ethics
Prior Performance	Clearly Defined Plan
Health of Children	Calendar
Socio-Economic Status of Community	Change Literature
Bilingual Status	Self-Actualization
Handicapping Conditions	Parent Expectations
Lack of Direction	State Dep't of Ed.
Unsafe Environment	Testing
Learning Styles	Sense of Belonging
Personal Motivation	Self-Determination
Culture	Parent Expectations
Administrative Planning	Communication
Minority Status	Staff Development
Self-Concept of Students	Desire for Excellence
Adequacy of Facilities	Incentives
Teacher Attitudes	Community Partners
Student Fears	Staff Buy-In
Parent Support	Funding
Peer Relations	Discipline
Behavior Problems	Politics

Table 3 is a partial list of restraining factors and driving forces that the leadership team came up with. This was then prioritized to identify the top six factors which drive or restrain change in the district. We also read and discussed work by Slater and Teddlie (1992) and the view of schools as dynamic institutions, either getting better or getting worse. The weighted priorities that the leadership team identified were not so different

from Slater and Teddlie's (1992) typology of school effectiveness based on 1) administrative appropriateness (AA), 2) teacher preparedness (TP), and 3) student readiness (SR). Slater and Teddlie propose different stages and routes to effectiveness in which factors are interdependent. For example, culture or managing organizational structure, is dependent on preparedness of teachers and readiness of students. This approach led to discussion of how it is that schools actually become better or worse.

We used the work of Bolman and Deal (1992) to propose that effective leaders use multiple frames to view the school or organizational environment. They identify four organizational frames: 1) structural, 2) human relations, 3) political, and 4) symbolic. The *structural frame* points to how organizations are structured, and on how individuals and groups are well coordinated vertically (chain-of-command) and horizontally (face-to-face interactions). The *human resources frame* highlights the importance of human needs and motives in an organization. The *political frame* points to the importance of power within an organization. The *symbolic frame* calls attention to symbols, rituals, meaning, and in a classical sense, the *function* of rituals in maintaining order and sense of well-being within a school and culture. Framing is the deliberate effort to look at the same thing from multiple perspectives; it allows leaders to see or notice things not seen before. Framing also points to the possibility of reframing, sizing up a situation from a different perspective. While most administrators only tap one or two of the frames, Bolman and Deal's (1992) data suggest that more effective school leaders access all the frames and are better able to recognize perspectives they and others bring to problem situations.

We presented a typology based on Etzioni (1976) that hypothesizes that organizational effectiveness is based on complementarities among the *goals, rewards, and commitments* of organizations and participants. Etzioni's typology looks as follows:

Table 4

Etzioni's Typology of Organizations

Goals	Rewards	Commitment
Cultural	Symbolic	Moral
Monetary	Remunerative	Calculative
Order	Freedom/ Absence of Punishment	Alienated

Adapted from Etzioni, 1975.

The group read and discussed a case study of distributed leadership by Johnson (1992). Her case study of leadership at the Hollibrook Elementary School looks at principal leadership and what happens when a new principal arrives on the scene. She describes ways in which the new principal, faculty, and staff renegotiated the leadership established by the former principal. These negotiations resulted in improved student achievement scores, reduced discipline problems, and increased parent involvement. The principal played a key role in supporting a model of shared leadership. The term "shared leadership" evolved from the conversations Johnson has with participants and the descriptions of daily activities and roles.

Working on the district policy manual. Based on a request from the Board, the leadership team set out to review and revise its policy manual. The manual is organized according to the classification system of the National School Boards Association. The

system provides a way of coding, filing, and locating policies. There are 12 major classifications, each identified by an alphabetical code. When asked, most of the leadership team members couldn't find a copy or current version of the policy manual. We participated in the first few of these sessions and there was overlap between updating the district policy manual, and our work on planning and professional development. Working on the district policy manual allowed, even forced the leadership team, individually and collectively, to share views, philosophies, and work as a group, to move through each of the sections. In retrospect, the team got bogged down in the process, as fatigue, boredom, and personnel changes interrupted their efforts. Table 5 gives a sense of the kinds of information found in the manual. As each section was presented, it provided opportunity to debate over the meaning of the section and its relevance and application to what actually occurred in the everyday interactions in the district. The policy manual had last been reviewed in December 1997, and there are 12 major classifications, each identified by an alphabetical code.

Table 5

Sample Sections of the CRSD Policy Manual (Based on ASBA Boilerplate)

A	Foundations And Basic Commitments
B	School Board Governance And Operations
C	General School Administration
D	Fiscal Management
E	Support Services
F	Facilities Development
G	Personnel
H	Meet And Confer
I	Instructional Program
J	Students
K	School - Community Relations
L	Education Agency Relations

Source: Arizona School Boards Association, 2002

One reason for the policy manual update was the perception by the County Superintendent (who acts as the School Board for the District) that administrative decisions were being made which at best ignored district policy, and at worst violated regulation and statute. According to the Arizona School Boards Association, "there is continual need to draft and adopt new written policies and revise the existing ones. Changes in state law and State Board of Education regulations may necessitate policy modifications. Therefore, as new policies are developed, they will be coded according to the classification system and issued for insertion into the manual." In our experiences, the process of drafting, adopting, and revising policies presenting an opportunity for the district leadership team to find or search for common ground in fundamental beliefs concerning education, schooling, children, teachers, parents, curriculum, instruction, and community. However, the effort represents a large investment of time and energy (weekly meetings over a period of months) and yielded limited benefit to the core

instructional programs, assessment efforts, and school improvement plans. Therefore, while it may have been useful as an activity for team building, it had modest impact on school sites for teachers, students, and instruction.

One outcome of the policy review was adopting a procedure by which policy could be revised and new policy statements developed. The procedure included:

- background of problem or issue,
- suggested policy to cover the issue,
- solicit feedback
- draft policy for governing board consideration; adjust accordingly,
- draft formal policy statement with legal advise,
- schedule first, and second readings at regular board meeting,
- schedule third reading and adopting by Governing Board.

This simple procedure reinforced the importance keeping the Board informed, and underscored the relationship between district policy and actions at school and site levels.

Master education plan and school improvement plans. Working through a common vision, mission, and goals were part of a larger need to assist with the development of a Master Education Plan and school-based plans for the district. At one of the meetings in early January, 2001, we presented a boilerplate plan for the administrative team to consider as a way of judging productivity and academic accountability. The plan was built around the view that children learn best in schools reflecting effective school practices and the plan listed some fourteen characteristics (e.g., clear mission, vision, and purpose; strong and well trained professional leadership; safe school environment; emphasis on learning; parental involvement; continuous evaluation, accountability). Each of the administrators was asked to go back to their schools, sites, or departments, and work with staffs to prepare an individual plan to include what needs to be done (standard or criteria), and evidence of how success would be evaluated

(evaluation of standard). Each of the principals and department heads were asked to bring these models back to their school and departments, and to work with faculty to develop a plan for the year. Towards the end of the school year, each of the administrators presented their own plans to the group for consideration and feedback. These plans became the basis of discussion and critique. However, there a range among the administrative team concerning how the actual plan were developed. Some of the principals simply copied what we had given them and simply added the name of their own site or department. In these cases, they applied the boilerplate to their own site or department, but with little or no consideration given to planning, implementation, opportunities for input and feedback, and evaluation. Some of the plans did include timelines, estimates of resources, instruments or inventories that would be used to collect evaluative information (i.e., a school perception survey). The more detailed action plans included explanatory narratives with more detailed text of activities, person responsible, target date, resources required, pre- and post-testing and other evidence of attainment, and staff development needs. This school was also involved in applying for a 21st Century Grant, and may have developed expertise in the grant writing experience.

In retrospect, the specific site-based action plans represented more of a technical and rational approach to school improvement that contrasted with some of the narrative themes we were pursuing during the year. And, it may have been better to separate evaluation activities from the professional development using narrative themes and writing stories. At the same time, the superintendent's contract was not renewed and Wright was asked to head the search for the next superintendent. And our role as

facilitative consultants became complicated by the inevitable discomfort over coming changes in the district and jockeying for favorable position and consideration.

Professional Development Through Stories and Narratives

Danzig (1997; 1999a, 1999b) writes about the use of story for professional development of school administrators. The work on narrative began by reading case studies of leadership and leadership development. During one of the early sessions, the group had read and analyzed a leadership case study entitled *Redefining leadership: A case study of Hollibrook Elementary School* (Johnson, 1992). The case study focuses attention on what happens when a new principal comes to a school and its impact on prior school improvement and professional development efforts. The case adopts more of a cognitive approach to understanding of school leadership and describes attempts by the original principal to change the way time and tasks are structured. She designs new approaches of professional development that focus attention on teacher and student learning. Her replacement, a new principal is less committed to these goals and less able to provide opportunities for staff learning and development. While well meaning, the new principal missed much of the learning that had previously occurred at the school.

The group also talked about some of the risks involved with crafting stories and difficulties in analyzing the meaning of stories. We considered work by Mattingly (1991) and the view that "telling stories offers one way to make sense of what has happened" (p. 235). Mattingly conducted action research studies of two groups of professionals, one group of bank officers, and the other a group of acute care hospital therapists. Mattingly concluded that the narrative discourse succeeded with the therapists and failed with the bankers because of differences in organizational culture. The therapists felt less at risk

and storytelling helped them to recognize the nature of their work. However, the bank was accustomed to highly controlled discourse. Bank officers did not want to record their thoughts as it may come back to harm them from others outside the bank or politically from colleagues and superiors within the bank (Mattingly, 1991, pp. 252-254).

The group also practiced story analysis and interpretation skills. They read two cases from Judy Shulman's casebook on diversity in the classroom (1993). Shulman (1993) provides a sense of how to read a case, and provides examples of cases of diversity. Each of the cases includes not only discussion of what happened, but also multiple responses to and interpretations of the actions described in the case. The group also read and discussed the stories of other school administrator's. They read excerpts from a doctoral dissertation on administrator mobility, which included follow up narrative interviews with four principals on why they had left the principalship (Alvarez, 2000). The stories presented first-person narratives with background and more detailed presentation of the story behind the mobility decisions: 1) moving into a higher position as a superintendent position in another district, 2) moving to a lateral position in another school district, 3) stepping down from a position because of political forces, and 4) leaving the education profession. Participants discussed their life experiences and careers as educators and provided a human context for the issue of mobility (Alvarez, 2001). The group read and discussed the story of Billie Charles Barnett, Tom Barone's story about a middle school dropout and some of the circumstances that place him at risk of failure in school (Barone, 1989). Later, we read and discussed Barone's narrative on the long-range influences of a teacher on a student (Barone, 1997).

Stories of the Participants: Some Examples

We begin with presentation of actual stories, with limited comment or annotation. At the end of the story, we provide limited comment or annotation on the extent to which novices reflected on story themes and were able to characterize the normative filters and knowledge that was embedded in the leadership stories. Some participants were able to make explicit the relevance of personal experience to decision-making and subsequent actions. Some were also able to explicitly capture the multiple perspectives that were part of the stories. Others were able to characterize situations in which personal values and institutional values conflict, and how leaders manage to bridge the gap between the two.

Learning From Crisis: The Superintendent's Story

We begin with the story of the school superintendent, who shared his story with us even though he knew that his contract was not being renewed. His story provides insight into his own background and experiences, as student, teacher, administrator, and superintendent. This is followed by narratives of some of the participants in the yearlong professional development activities. We conclude with our own narratives.

Learning from Crisis: The Superintendent's Story:

Family Background and Schooling

I was first raised in a family of five sons in a rural community in Northwest Pennsylvania. My father was a blue-collar employee of an electrical utility company. My mother did not work outside of the house; she became my Sunday school teacher and Cub Scout den mother. My preteen and early teen years were spent working either on my grandfather or uncle's dairy farm during the summers and weekends. My first four years of school were in a one-room school with six grades and six rows with a wood stove in the rear of the classroom. We had outside restrooms with a hand water pump and a large, metal bell on top of our one-room school. My brother, who was two years younger than I, eventually attended the same school, and we had the same elementary teacher that had taught my mother during her elementary education. We walked about a half-mile to get to our school, which was in a maple grove next to our teacher's house.

During my first year of school, my mother said that somehow I had walked home and gone upstairs to my bedroom during the morning of the school day without anyone realizing it until she heard me singing. When she went upstairs to determine why I was not at school I told her that

although I liked my teacher and classmates, I had learned everything and no longer needed to attend classes. She convinced me that there would be other things to learn as the year progressed so I agreed to extend my education.

The teacher in our one-room schoolhouse used a unique motivation system to encourage higher educational achievement. If we received a perfect grade on our spelling assignment, we'd be allowed to go outside to the woodshed to bring firewood for the classroom wood stove. If we received a perfect grade on our math assignment, we might be allowed to go outside to bang the chalkboard erasers on the giant maple tree that stood next door to our white one-room school. If we received a perfect grade on our geography assignment, we might be allowed to go outside to use the hand water pump to bring a pitcher of water into the classroom for drinking.

The one time that I can remember getting into trouble during my one-room school days is when I became adrift on a creek raft that had been constructed over several days during school recess. The raft was made with broken logs that we had cut near the creek that ran behind our one-room school. I got into trouble because when I rode the raft one day, the water swept me too far down stream before I could stop to get back in time for the large metal outside bell ringing to end recess.

My parents were very conservative, ultra-strict with strong work ethics. At one time my mother had been a nun; she was thirty-one years old when she married my father, and then gave birth to five sons. My parents loved each other very much and never argued or showed anything but total admiration for each other. My father worked out of town a lot and my parents' hobbies were gardening, landscaping, canning vegetables, handicrafts, home carpentry, boy scouts and church activities. All the people in our small community, within twenty miles of our house, were second-generation immigrants from Eastern Europe. We had three churches in the community and everyone attended one of these three local churches and attended Sunday school and summer church school.

At the beginning of my fifth grade, the township combined the fifteen rural one-room schools into one elementary school. We were put into ten homogeneous groups according to our academic abilities. I was put into the highest track and this forced me to stretch my scholastic skills. My favorite elementary school teacher was my fifth and sixth grade teacher; her name was Mrs. Shell. She was very challenging and had very high expectations for the students. Competing against each other for high grades was exciting to me and for the first time I was with other students who challenged me. Mrs. Shell was always odd. She would pose questions to our skills wherever she found us, in the cafeteria, the playground, ball fields, parking lot, hallways, or in the grocery stores. She would make up verbal math problems and she would test us about historical trivia and science problems solving.

My high school was sponsored by Edinborough University, and was more of a university training school. My group (college prep) got all of the attention; all of the professors that came into the school wanted to work with us, and the schools that came to visit wanted to work with us. We were always doing neat stuff, science experiments, out doing things, visiting places, putting things together. It was a nice situation. Later, when I went back and talked with some of my classmates, I saw that there was unfairness to the experiences I had compared to some of the others. For the kids that were in the upper level groups, it was very positive because we were being challenged by our classmates all of the time. We got all of the good stuff. And what I found out later on is how much the other kids resented us. They felt like they were second-class people, that they never were able to expand, never able to grow until after they got out of that school. When they got out of that school, when they went on to their own things, they accomplished quite a bit, at least some of them. But some of them were definitely ruined by it, were definitely hurt by it permanently I think, as far as from what they tell me anyway when we'd go back to our reunions and we'd talk. In retrospect, that was the negative aspect of my school. But, to tell you the truth, when I was in school I didn't see that.

Early Work Experiences and Attending College

Growing up, I had experience in working on my grandfather's farm. I had gotten to know the local veterinarian and the vet and I used to do things together. He'd call me to his office whenever and I just developed a working relationship with the veterinarian. And then he said,

"Would you like to work at the zoo?" I liked working with the vet and I liked working with the animals; so I went to work in the zoo. I started off as an assistant zookeeper and then I became a full-time zookeeper. This happened at the time I was in high school, during the summer, on weekends, and on afternoons sometimes when I could do it. But basically, I just progressed and I was accepted into the zoo because I liked the animals so much. I was able to progress so much that by the time I graduated from high school, they made me the head zoo keeper. At the time I was making more money than my father made. I had a car, a boat, a motorcycle . . . I had everything I could possibly imagine, so why would I want to go to college. I had more money than anybody that I knew. I was making good, I was in a position of a manager and it was just great. I had a great life. Everybody would tell me what a great life I had.

But, I was sitting in my office one day when I realized that all of my friends were gone. They had all gone to universities. It took me about a week after school had started to realize that all my friends were gone. And so I told myself that I've got to go, I've got to get into the university. So I went to the university and asked if I could enroll and they just laughed at me, because school had already started – this was Penn State. They said no, but if you want to go to night school, you can go to night school. They sent me into a room with the school catalogs and there was the night school catalog, so I signed up for night school classes. As I had looked at the day catalog, the regular catalog, and then the evening catalog, I thought, well this guy must be good because he teaches during the days and the nights. I decided I was going to take his classes. So, I signed up for the class, I went in and I said "I'm a week late, can I take the class?" Answer – "yes."

I was talking to the teacher and trying to find out what assignments I had to make up. He was basically telling me what the class was doing today, and that he did the same thing during the day that he was doing here at night. He told me what time the class meets during the day and I asked if I could attend that class, because it just sounded like it was exciting. His response was, "oh sure, you can get into that class" so that I actually took the night class during the day. It gave me the idea I might do that for the other classes, so I signed up for all these classes that I could take from a professor that also taught class during the day. So, that's how I got enrolled at the university.

I spent two years at the State U. A friend of mine on the wrestling team encouraged me to go out for the team. I liked sports, but I was too small to play football, which was the sport that everybody else was doing. So I went out for the wrestling team and I did real well there during my freshman year. I got excited about it. Then I wanted to wrestle varsity so I went to wrestle varsity and I just wasn't good enough. I hurt my leg and that put me back, but basically I just wasn't good enough to make the Penn State varsity team. But I had a clever idea. I had a friend that was going to Kent State University, in Canton, Ohio, which was not too far from my hometown nor Penn State. I went to visit that campus and it was smaller, much smaller than Penn State University, about half the size. And I thought oh, this would be a nice place that I can go there and I can make their wrestling team. And, so I transferred to Kent State University. And the bottom line of all of that is that when I went out for the wrestling team, I found that their wrestling team was actually better the Penn State wrestling team. I couldn't make the team, so basically, I just became a more serious student, I guess.

Student Protest in the 1970s. I attended Kent State, during the time of Vietnam War and when I found out I couldn't make the wrestling team, I thought I might just quit school and go to war. I thought I'm going fight with my old buddies that were fighting in the war. So I announced it to my parents and they were upset with me for quitting college and joining the service. I told all of my relatives and all of my friends that I was going off to the war. So I went to Buffalo, New York, which was the place where I would go to be inducted and I did my physical. They called me into a room and told me I couldn't go in the Army because I had a bad knee. I said, what do you mean I have a bad knee and they said well you knee moves laterally and its not supposed to move that laterally; it moves 5% laterally an[illegible]'s impossible for a knee to move that way so you can't go in. And I said well, I'll sign the lette[illegible] just want to go to the war, I want to fight and they said no, you couldn't do that. I couldn't join the service. I tried convincing them . . .I tried doing everything — writing a letter to them, saying I would re-take all the tests, but no, they wouldn't take me

So I had to go back and tell my parents that I couldn't get into the Army, I couldn't go fight the war. So, I finished that year and then it was 1970 and I was going to graduate. If you remember May of 1970 is when the anti-War demonstrations were going on. What was actually happening at that time was that there was a teamster strike and you may remember that the teamster strike, one of the tricks that they were doing is that they were taking pumpkins and other objects, throwing them from bridges to stop the scab trucks that were trying to get through. In response to the teamsters, the governor put National Guardsman on all of the bridges throughout Ohio to make sure that the bridges were protected and that the teamsters could not throw things down on those trucks and stop the trucks were going through.

It was right before the election for the governor, and the governor wanted to show everybody that he was a tough guy. He was going to show everybody in the state that he was a tough governor, so he takes the same people that had been away from home for two months guarding bridges, hadn't slept, hadn't been at home, had to sleep in sleeping bags at the bridges, and puts them on a campus where there had been a political demonstration. It was a Friday night and if you remember, President Nixon had said that he was going to bring troops into a country that we had not had troops in before, so there was a political demonstration that night in the town. The political demonstration wasn't that big, but a few people, maybe fifty people, had turned over some garbage bins, it wasn't that big of a deal.

To show you how active I was, I was out at the golf course playing golf because it was a very nice May weekend and finals were coming in two weeks. I was out playing golf and I got to play golf free because I had been an athlete, so I was at the university golf course; it was about ten minutes outside of town and because I got to play free, I'm was going to play all day long. So I played from morning to night. I drove back into town in my little sports car and there are tanks and guard dogs and national guardsmen walking the street to get to my home. I go, and my thought is as I'm driving up and I see a tank on, in the road with guys with guns and guard dogs, I'm thinking Russia has dropped the bomb we are now at war and we are in a military alert. So I drove up to the tank and ask what's going on and he said "I can't talk to you, Just go home." I said well my home was on the other side of his tank. I lived in an upstairs bedroom in this house that I rented and all night long there are helicopters going over and spot lights going on and I'm trying to call people to find out what is going on. I find that there had been a demonstration the night before and the governor brought in troops. And we hear helicopters on Saturday night and then the same thing again on Sunday night.

On Monday morning when we all had to go to school, no one was very happy because they didn't get to go out on Saturday night, and didn't go out again on Sunday. On Monday we go to class and there are troops all over the campus. There are troops marching up and down and whatever, and it was kind of like a novelty and there is kind of a joke; people were flowers in the bayonets and stuff like that. But by the second day it was no longer a joke, because you were told you couldn't go to the you needed to go. I was working as a custodian cleaning the art building, which was one of the best jobs on campus. I went to work that night and the building that I was supposed to clean and was told that I couldn't go to that building. And so I went home and that was Monday night. On Tuesday night it was the same type of deal. I think that next day that one of the building was burned down. What ended up happening was there would be people going to class and the troops were marching up and down.

And then you have the shooting. I was in the library and the shots were being fired. I was sitting in the library and I heard gunfire, I mean, these are automatic rifles that go off. I had my window and was sitting on the second floor of the library when I heard these shots go off. So I ran downstairs and I looked out the window and couldn't see anything because my room was facing the back parking lot and the fire, the gunfire was on the other end of the building. As I ran down to the main floor to get out the front of the building and it had already been chained shut. I thought, wow, how did they chain the door shut so quickly, I couldn't figure that out. So I thought, I know there is another door, so I went to the back of the library because there was another door back there, again it was chained shut. I thought, gosh, I don't understand why they are chaining these doors shut; it was like I can't figure things out. So I just went upstairs and the windows were open, and thought that it wasn't that far to jump down. And I thought, I'm going to jump down there and take my stuff and jump down to the parking lot.

As soon as I do that, I hear this vehicle start up, a diesel motor start up and the vehicle start up. I was in the back of the building, hear this and all of the sudden I see a barrel coming out from beside this building and this barrel, this gun barrel, turns towards me and that's when I realized it is a tank. I'm there by myself in the parking lot and this tank pulls up and stops, and I'm like afraid to do anything. And then he lowers the gun to point it at me, so I just don't do anything, I stop right there. This guy pops out and say "you can't be out of the building." And I said, well I just jumped out of that window and needed to know where I could go. He said okay, just get off campus. So I walked through the parking which went past a stream, and I went home. That's when I found out all of the other stuff going on that day at Kent State. So that was my experience at Kent State. We finished our exams that year through the mail. That's how I finished my exams.

My degree at the time was in business and so I started to apply for jobs. And a very similar thing happened to me when I finished university that had happened when I finished high school. Just before I had graduated, I had gotten a job at the university and they had opened up an ice arena. I was the night custodian in the Art building and I wasn't about to give that one up but I also got a job part-time as the ice arena Zamboni driver. While I was in high school the zoo that I worked for also had an ice arena for a moneymaking activity, and I learned how to drive the Zamboni. So anyway, I got the job working part-time as the Zamboni driver at the university. And I got a call from the university to work at the university as a Zamboni driver because there other Zamboni driver quit and they wanted me to come. I said no, that I had a college degree; I'm not going to work as a Zamboni driver. And they offered me so much money that I had to do it. I was just making so much money I just couldn't refuse it.

While I was working as a Zamboni driver, I was applying for jobs related to my degree which was in business management. Every place I would go they would offer me a quarter of what I was making at the university. The University had put up these two ice arenas, but they weren't making money because the guy that had been the Zamboni driver and director of the ice arena weren't doing a good job. So they kept offering me a lot of money because I was making money for them. Because I was young, I would keep the thing open all hours of the day and it was just making them all kinds of money. Every time I would go in to resign, they would offer more money. I honestly wasn't trying to leverage them to get more money, but I wanted to do something else; it got to be obscene. I had this wonderful apartment, I had a maid, I had a boat, I had a van, everything a young person could imagine. I didn't know what else I was going to do with my money. So I would save money just because I didn't know what else to do with it not because I wanted go places or do things.

I was having a very good time and I started to join my friends, for the first time, being a university kid. I was a single guy, living on the university, all of this money, everybody knew who I was because the hockey team played there and I got to drive the Zamboni during the hockey games. The only thing I had to do was every hour I had to do the ice. So the rest of the time I would just party and have a good time with friends around the university; it was great. I had a good job so I just partied and enjoyed the life being on the university campus. I had always been a serious student during and after the war working part-time and I never got to enjoy it. But now, I started doing more university stuff, and I'm just like digging it! I thought, "this is great." And, because I was working for the university, I could take some classes for free.

So I started taking some classes and it was all happening at the time in education, so I took some education classes. And I thought that I understood what was going on in these education classes. I took a class in the sociology of education or something like that and remember thinking this isn't like the economics classes, or the finance classes. So I took another class. I think I took two or three classes while I was working for the university, at first just for something to do, and later because it was a benefit of work. And then I decided I wanted to go to graduate school, that learning is fun, and I liked it. So I save all of this money and decided that I was going to go to graduate school. Because it was cold in Pennsylvania and Ohio I applied to two graduate schools, where I knew that it was warm, in Miami and in Phoenix. I applied to the University of Miami in Coral Gables, because I'd seen pictures and I had a friend that had been to Arizona and showed me some pictures of Arizona. I applied for those two graduate schools.

Graduate school and entry in teaching. Some friends asked me which graduate school I was going to go to and I thought whichever one accepts me first. But, both of my acceptance letters came on the same day. So I was back at the university and sitting with my friend pondering which graduate school should I go to. And he said well, if you go to Florida, the only thing you can do in Florida is water ski and go to the beach; if you go to Arizona they have a place there where you can snow ski up in the mountains (and you like snow skiing), and you can surf because they have this artificial surf place. You are real close to California, so you can just drive over to California and go to the beach there, so what you ought to do is go to ASU graduate school. I said it makes sense to me. So, I put everything in my car and drove from Canton, Ohio to Tempe, Arizona. It was the first time I'd ever driven across the country, and I stopped in Albuquerque, and I liked Albuquerque so much and the University of New Mexico, that I thought I'm just going to do one semester there, at ASU, and come back. And I thought "this is great, sunshine, its clean, its nice" and I hadn't seen anything like that coming from Pennsylvania.

When I got to Tempe, Arizona, I liked graduate school; it was the first time ever that I didn't have to work while I was going to school full-time and I really liked that. I really liked education classes, and wondered why I hadn't done this before instead of spending time in boring business classes. I found out I needed to do classes in order to get my certification for teaching so I started doing that. Then, I continued on with my degree, a graduate degree in education. I dropped out of my original intention, which was to get an MBA, and finished up with the education degree. With that, I taught for four years in Phoenix, in a large school district that was called G Union High School District. I taught high school business courses in a program called the Work-Experience Program. Basically I taught half the day and the other half of the day I coordinated the kids that were working for work experience credit. I did that for four years.

Gradually, I became disenchanted with the large city, which was becoming more polluted and I didn't like vile haze and all that. I'd gotten married in the interim and went to Prescott, Arizona, and just thought this was the most wonderful place in the world. Prescott was clean, a small city and I just had a great time. I enjoyed teaching, loved it. I was also teaching night classes at Yavapai College and I just thought it's the greatest life in the world. However, my wife, who was teaching at the same high school I was, wanted to do something different. She decided that she wanted to work on her doctorate and started taking classes from NAU. She would drive from Prescott to Flagstaff and did that for a semester. I was worried about her driving in the middle of the winter from Prescott to Flagstaff, so I got involved in the program too.

I very much liked being in the doctorate program because it was just challenging and exciting and a stretch for me. My wife and I would study together and do what the professors required. They would post grades and I always had to make sure that mine was at the top of the class. I thought she liked the competition. Competition doesn't cause me stress, in fact, I kind of enjoy it; for my wife, it meant a lot of stress and brought out other problems. And eventually, she had a nervous breakdown and our marriage ended. That shocked me. I didn't see any of this happening or anticipate anything coming on; it was a major sad life experience. And I remember thinking that was the toughest thing I'd ever gone through, by far.

Entry into school administration. But by then, I'd had taken enough administrative credits and the fellow that had been the assistant principal was retiring. And the principal asked if I would take the job, and initially, I said no, that I enjoyed teaching. He basically asked me to do it as a favor, and I said that I would do it for a year, but that I really enjoyed teaching and didn't want to do this. So, I took the job and I loved it. Basically they gave me free reign and it was great. I got involved with student counsel. I was in charge of curriculum. At Prescott High School, 90% of the kids went to college and it was a very good environment to be in as far as academics. I just kept doing what ever I wanted to do as far as putting on some programs, putting on academic decathlons, all kinds of things, and we had a lot of neat things happen in that first year. So I said I want to continue, and continued on as the assistant principal. I was up in Prescott for thirteen years and I liked what I was doing.

I decided I was going to apply for some jobs that down in the Valley. I didn't think there was any way that I was going to move into the principalship in Prescott. The guy that was the principal was almost the same age as I was and he was still doing a very good job. And I didn't want to hold the state record for being an assistant principal. So a job opened up in Cave Creek

and I had told everybody that if I could go anywhere, it would be to move to Cave Creek because it was a small, nice little community. The other thing was that in two years they were going to build their own new high school. So I applied for and got the job as planning principal and then principal.

I spent the next two years planning, getting involved in the community, and building a new school. I had remarried and when I would come home my wife would ask me what I did that day. And I explained that I spent all of my time working with architects, engineers and construction guys. Although I was there for six years, it was especially during the last two years that I spent all of my time building more and more buildings and more and more classrooms. I enjoyed it but I wasn't working with kids or feeling like I was making the place better. I mean the whole purpose of getting into education was to work with children. And I thought I want to go out to do something different. I didn't know what I wanted to do, but I wanted to do something different. So I resigned.

I then applied for a job in the County School District that was different from anything I'd ever done, working with programs for at-risk kids. I did that for a year and I was enjoying it when the county superintendent asked me to become the school superintendent. She had had some problems with press and wanted me to clean up the program because of the difficult experiences with the media. Although I had never been an assistant superintendent, I had been a principal and I had just finished my doctorate. So I accepted the offer. That is basically how I got here, to this position.

Learning from Crisis: An Administrator's Perspective

Probably the most difficult thing that I ever did in my educational career was when I was the principal at CS High School. I think it was about my third year in the district, and it was right after the new high school had opened. It was a new and beautiful school that we had planned and put together. On the first day of school, one of the alternative kids, one of the gangster kids, one of the kids that thought that he was a gang-wannabe type, which was unusual for that Cave Creek community, beat-up one of the high profile kids in this school. He beat him up in the lunchroom and beat him up badly, just smacked him up real bad. The kid who got beat up was a member of the football team and so several members of the football team took on this other group up, who were basically skateboard kids, into rock music and that type of thing. The kids from the football team then beat up a couple of the skateboard kids and then a couple of days later some of the skateboard kids found this football player by himself and beat him up. Within the first week of school we had had several fights, bad fights in that kids were hurt, and there kids who needed to be stitched up, kids in the hospital.

A group of parents called me up and said that they wanted to meet with me. Two of the parents said that they had heard of these fights going on, that they were concerned about it, and that they were going to invite some other parents. They wanted to have a meeting with me, the principal. So, we set a time of 8 o'clock in the evening. I had been doing whatever on the campus that day and I told them that I would meet them in the cafeteria. I had a guard in the cafeteria and people were alarmed, and I was just totally shocked. Basically I went in and I said I would like to hear your concerns. The parents went on and on -- *schools were unsafe, that I hadn't done my job, that the kids were out of hand and they were going to demolish the school, that kids were afraid to go to classes and kids weren't going to school, that I had let it get out of hand, that I had been too strict with these kids and not strict enough with these other kids.* The parents had a whole list of things that I had done wrong. So I just listened to it all and I was taken aback by all of it because I had been so consumed with it that I just hadn't been seeing all of the concerns that had been there. I just didn't know what to say and I told them that I was going to get a microphone so that I could talk to them. So I walked down to the gym, got a microphone, and as I was getting the microphone, I was kind of putting my thoughts together.

Basically I just told them that there were some things that I was going to do and laid out a plan of things that I was thinking of while I was getting the microphone. I quickly came up with a plan of action and certain activities I was going to do to stop this gang fighting that was going on, and the things that I could do to make the school safer. I said that we would have a meeting within one week and they would evaluate whether or not I was doing an effective job or not. I

couldn't think of anything else to do. After I recommended all of these things, it was two weeks later when I met with parents again. At that meeting only two people showed up, the original two parents. They just told me that the parents liked what I was doing and that I was carrying through and what I had promised. And it went from a very intense situation to a situation where

We found out that there other issues on the campus that I hadn't been aware of and that we needed to work on. Some the things came from the discussions that I had with the kids. I'd call on different groups of kids and we'd have an open forum and they would just talk to me. Then we would try to do something about it. There were a few kids that were doing different things that I was not aware of. For instance one of the major issues was the fact that the males, the boys, were treating the girls very poorly. They were saying things to the girls, they were playing sexual games, harassment things, abuse things, just bad stuff that was going on. I would never have learned about these things if the fights hadn't happened and if we hadn't had these open forums. We found professional staff, and other people to work with the student body and by end of the school year I think we had approached issues that needed to be approached; it took a full year probably to get everything to do with those incidents resolved and handled. That time, less than nine months, was probably the most difficult situation that I had ever faced as an administrator. We needed to have some type of vehicle to find out what is going on in the school because on the surface, it wasn't always observable. Uncovering these issues and problems are now considered a normal part of our efforts to find out what was going on with the kids.

I think that the reason why I was able to deal with all those issues and other stuff is because I had the conviction that I could solve the problem and I was able to solve them. If you had heard the attacks, the things that were being said that night by the parents, you would just say the problems were just too big, too difficult. It never entered my mind that we were not going solve these problems. I just thought we could solve them. I promised the people that I could and we did. So I think that you need to have the confidence to go ahead and approach problems and hit them head on and to be up front with the people, communicate with the people.

The kind of things that I would have done differently has to do with communicating with others. I was communicating with student counsel, I was going to the PTA meetings, I was going to the booster club meetings. But I wasn't talking to a cross-section of the student body and that's what I needed to do. There was a group of students that felt disenfranchised, was disenfranchised and I needed to affirmatively go after that group. I needed to identify who they were, identify who the leaders of these different groups were, subgroups, cliques, or whatever you want to call these social groups. I needed to identify them, bring them in, talk to them, and communicate with them. That's what I did not do prior to this whole set of events. After that, we would take different social groups on campus and identify the kids in the skater group, the Hispanic group. I would have faculty and staff identify these kids and then we would go on retreats and work out issues and come back and work together as a group. That's what I would do. My educational experiences, while difficult in many ways, didn't prepare me for being at the center of all things. While I was principal at the high school, all problems centered on me, on the principal. The principal has to solve everything. And my first reaction was I can't solve it, I can't do everything. But instead of saying that, I began to bring in all of these people. And then I brought in all of these people and we would solve problems together.

I now see that in my previous school, there was probably a whole community of families in difficult situations that I didn't see or communicate with. I remember an incident when I was the assistant principal, when a gunshot went off inside the women's restroom. This was at seven o'clock in the morning. I went inside and lying in a pool of blood, was a heavy-set female student. My first reaction was to head down the hall yelling, looking for someone who knew first aid and EMT. I dragged one of teachers out of the classroom to help me, because I was going to save this girl from dying. I started yelling at the janitor -- call 911, call the ambulance, call the nurse. And I remember thinking I was taking care of this unique situation because I was going to save this girl from dying. The paramedics came, the nurse came, and the police had come. And then, they were taking of that situation. I remember thinking okay; this immediate thing right now is being taken care of. I will go see what is going on in the rest of the school.

As I was leaving the restroom, the police Sergeant, who I knew and had worked with, came over and I thought, wow, this is good because he is going to take over this part of it. I no longer have to supervise what is going here, he is going to take charge of it. He walks into the

restroom and he comes out bawling. I wonder why is he crying and it turns out that she was his buddy's daughter. That is how she got the gun and killed herself. I'm trying to get him to get his act together but he's just leaning against the wall bawling. I can't figure out why is he crying and I couldn't get him to explain why he was bawling. Finally another police officer comes up and tells me what's going on, and then he takes charge. So now I can walk away from it and go see what's going on in the school. The school is kind of a large building, in a square, with a central courtyard and classrooms all around that house about 1800 students. The teachers are standing in front of the doors because it is a lockdown situation and the kids are required to stay in the classroom. But the kids want to go out because they heard gunshots and some kids were screaming, crying, out of control. So I was trying to calm down one class and then I'd go to another classroom. Some classes were out of control and some were dealing with it. I would find teachers or people that were handling their class well and then I would get their help to other teachers in other situations that were having trouble. It took a while for the people to get the body out of the room, get the place cleaned up because there was blood everywhere and there was an investigation and all of that. And the other kids are trapped in their rooms and couldn't go out of their rooms for, I don't know how many hours. There were all kinds of guessing about what had happened, so basically we tried to announce what had happened and what was going on. We told the students that if they wanted to leave school, they could leave. If they need help, then they could get help or whatever else they needed. Two years prior to this, we had had two suicides at this same school and the prior year before that we had had four suicides. White, upper middle-class kids were committing suicide and there was copycat stuff going on. We had gone through a lot of different programs —counseling and support groups, help groups. I thought that after having gone through all of these suicides, that there was nothing that our school or our staff couldn't deal with. But this was very different, in that this girl committed suicide on campus at seven A.M. just as school was starting. When you force kids to stay into their rooms, where they have to stay inside, it just compounds the whole thing.

In retrospect, what would I have done differently? We were very good at getting in the counselors, getting in church people, getting in the parents. And we had all of these crises plans. But we had never anticipated what would happen if you had a suicide on campus. We hadn't done that drill. I think that if we had done that, things would have worked better. That is the one thing that we just hadn't anticipated that. That was probably one of the most difficult challenges in my administrative career.

Learning to manage the media after the murder of a student. A student from another school murdered a very popular student from the high school, approximately a mile from the campus. Because it happened on a Sunday night, Monday morning the media played it all morning long on the radio and on the TV. It was the story of a murder that happened with this nice upper middle-class rich kid from this nice rich school. So it was a very high visibility story played on all of the news media, TV and radio channels, and front page of the newspaper. The murder of this student was a big story and the media descended upon the campus. From previous experience of working with the media in other crisis situations, I knew that there were some things that I could with the media. I had been involved in a First Amendment situation in which kids were passing out pamphlets on campus that eventually went to the Supreme Court, in which I had barred the media from the campus. That compounded the problem; it made the problem worse because the media then took an antagonistic view towards me, towards the school. They would try all kinds of different ways to sneak on the campus. They would find ways to get hold of students anyway. And so I learned from that. So in this situation where the student was murdered, when they came to campus I invited them on the campus. I put all of the media in a single room and had them sit there while I would come and make statements. And after I made statements, I had a counselor come in and made some statements. Then, I had some students come in and make statements. Because of the past experience I had with the first amendment issue and seeing what had happened when I tried to control the media, I learned it was better to provide the media with access and information. By providing them access people to talk to, they could do their story at least with the possibility putting on a positive twist. The media continued to do stories after the murder to help the community and the school get to handle the situation. Instead of being in an adversarial relationship with the media, they became

a group of people who wanted to help us. The media coverage did some good things for us; they would highlight the situation and it helped the kids heal, helped the faculty heal, and helped the community heal after dealing with murder.

I think that previous situation helped me learn to use the media for your benefit. I don't want to use the word "use" as manipulate because that wasn't it; it was allowing them access but not access where they would just walk around and go wherever they wanted. I compromised in a positive way, in that I allowed the m[illegible]e in but stay within a boundary. Then I would go to individuals and ask them to talk to the me[illegible]as the teacher representative, student representative, or parent representative. So the thing that I learned from that is you can't get groups of students, parents, teachers, and community members to work together when you try to keep the media out or keep things a secret.

The superintendent's story provides insight into his learning, and how learning from experience shaped his handling of events and school-related crisis. One idea that comes from this story is consideration of how leaders anticipate problems and how anticipation results in subsequent crisis (or problems) being averted (Forester, 1991). This raises a secondary question of how others will recognize this skill as leadership expertise, when the preferred outcome is that nothing or nothing bad happens (as opposed to problems or crisis happening). In this story, there are examples of both lack of anticipation (the superintendent's surprise at finding a crowd of angry parents in the cafeteria) and his application of prior learning (the importance of giving the media access and to their concerns for news and information). The fact that his contract was not renewed during the year that we were working there, may speak to his inability to anticipate what was expected of him by the County Superintendent/Board and/or his willingness to do something about it.

Entering School Administration from Special Education Experiences

The next story is by a member of the administrative team with the most years of experience with the District. Her story is raises issues of gender and the requisite experience for entry into school administration through her background in special education.

Serving Special Education Children as Entry into School Administration

Background and Education

I am the daughter of an Air Force Master Sergeant. I was raised as an Air Force child. I lived somewhere new every two and a half years until I was almost through high school. I lived in many, many places. I went to many, many schools. The experiences I had as an Air Force child, living all over were very positive, in terms of helping me learning to work with new people, get along in new places, and deal with a lot of experiences. I was a very good student. I finished high school in Abilene, Texas in 1961. I graduated 12th out of 551 students. I went on to Southwest Texas State College on a government loan, federal government loan. I got my bachelor's degree in speech and language pathology in 1965 and stayed on to do my master's degree with I completed in 1966.

The first year I worked was in San Marcos, Texas, where the college was. I did a pilot program for the State of Texas teaching what now call learning disabled children. What they were called then were MBI, or minimally brain-injured children. So, I did the very first LD program in the state of Texas, back in 1966. From there, I moved to Fairfax County, Virginia, where my husband and my husband worked for the CIA in Washington, DC. I worked for Fairfax County, Virginia, again as a speech and language therapist. I worked for one year in Virginia, became pregnant with my first child left school to raise my family and did not work for the next eight years.

Special Education as Preparation for School Administration

I was in special education classrooms prior to 1975, when the public law for the implementation of special education, PL 94-142 was passed. So, I've seen a lot of things happen in special education. I think that taking care of the rights of parents and kids in special ed is important. I do think the paperwork has gotten out of hand. I think that it dissuades good special educators from continuing in the field because they don't particularly like or are adept at doing the paperwork that's involved in special education. I know that a successful special education program has to have good paperwork in order to be successful or it's going to be in trouble in the monitoring process. I have worked with excellent special education teachers who have not been able to handle the paperwork and, unfortunately, if I had to do it again, I wouldn't have hired them because it is very, very hard to do. But, yes, I think we are making progress with our special education kids. And, remember, back when I first started in special education, a high percentage of the kids that we now have in our public schools were not in our public schools. So, I think in that respect, we have taken a lot of kids out of institutions and closets and brought them into mainstream public education.

A lot of people go into special education because first of all, they have someone or some way that gives them a special interest the field. I originally wanted to be a history teacher, but I had an uncle who taught physics at Bryce University in southwest Texas. He suggested then, and this was 1961, that I go into special ed because he said that was the field of the future. He basically said that there

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

were handfuls and handfuls of history teachers, but that there were not very many people who were in the field of special education and that that was going to be very big in public education. And I think he was right. But, I still would have liked to be in a history classroom. I think I would have enjoyed that.

I returned to work in the fall of 1978 when I came to work for this Accommodation School District, which became the Regional School District. I was the speech and language therapist and I worked at several different schools throughout the valley. I traveled a great deal. A couple of years later I became the Director of Special Ed for the program and I remained Special Ed Director for about nine years. Then, I was Assistant Superintendent for about three years. And then I became a principal and I've been a principal ever since approximately 1990-1991.

Administrative Preferences

I give a great deal of importance, as far as my administrative style to being organized and personable. I believe it's important for people to be able to get along with each other. I do not like to work with haughty or arrogant people, and I therefore try not to be haughty or arrogant myself. I appreciate the classroom teacher's role, the role of the special educator, because I've done all those things. But, I'm not a classroom teacher. I've never been a classroom teacher. So, it's important to me to be able to understand all the demands and the needs that they have. Something that had an effect on my professional practice or my career, I would have to say was the Effective Schools Movement and also the professor from California, where you did the Effective Teaching Skills, Madeline Hunter. Those two things were very useful to me and I have, I think, incorporated them, as far as being an effective teacher, an effective principal, and trying to accomplish the things that happen in an effective school.

I enjoy being an administrator. I do not wish to go back to the classroom. I like doing what I do. I think my organizational skills are quite good and I'm able to accomplish things, even on a long time line. I can plan. I'm very careful with my calendar and I'm dependable, as far as following a timeline and keeping on schedule with assignments that I'm given. My first superintendent that was my mentor for a number of years has positively influenced me in this district. Dr. Arthur Parker, who was, I think, an extremely effective personnel manager for our district for a long time, has influenced me positively. He used to spend a lot of time talking to me, sharing his insights and his background. I think I have profited from a lot of the things that he shared with me and talked to me about

I have a couple of other skills too. I communicate well in both verbal and written expression. I have very limited, marginal computer skills and very, very poor math. But, I am learning and I appreciate the technology. I actually enjoy the things that I'm able to do with the computer. I have, I think, a very rich and varied background, both as a person and a teacher, therapist, and an administrator. I enjoy working with the Accommodation School, and I like working with the kids with special needs. I've always done that. I enjoy working as an administrator in the detention schools, perhaps more than any other assignment I've had with the regional school district. I was

apprehensive at first, and I was really surprised to find that I liked working in the detention centers. I like working with detention staff members and I have no fears or problems in working with the population. The teachers are good to work with and the kids, students for the most part, are appreciative of what we do. I plan to work for approximately another eight to ten years. This, by the way, is the only district I've ever worked for in Arizona. I've worked for the district for 23 years. I've enjoyed the work that I do and I think I've been appropriately compensated and rewarded for the things that I've done, so I'm happy to be in the district and I have a very positive feeling about the future of our district and our programs.

In presenting her story, Diane relates her early travel as part of a military family, and a conservatism born out of Depression-era parents. She indicates that she is a good student (except for math) and her entry into special education is based on considerations of the job market of the 1960s rather than zeal to work with a particular population of children. She leaves the workforce to raise her own family, and presents a view towards balance and health in one's personal and professional life, just as she has balanced family and profession. As an administrator, she defines herself as a negotiator and peacemaker, a good colleague and team player. She is mostly supportive of the work of teachers, though she has never been a teacher. In the telling of her story, Diane told us that she "tries to make life and the job as pleasant and comfortable for people as possible." Diane's story draws heavily on the moral lessons of her parents, where leaders are organized, make good use of available resources, and conserve time and money. There is less room for conflict in this style, and Diane told us that in her many years as a school administrator, she has never fired anyone. She sees her leadership as more personal, with the goal of getting people to enjoy their lives.

Rural Work Ethic and Moving Up the Ladder

The next story is about growing up in a rural Arizona community. It is a story that relates to gender, ethnicity, and work ethic.

A Administrator's Story: M oving Up the Ladder

Background and Growing Up

I was born and raised in a small mining town. The Magma Copper Mining Company pretty well controlled the climate and the culture of the town. Eighty percent of the citizens of Superior worked for Magma, this included the copper smelter, company hospital and the company grocery store. Students at the local elementary and high schools started their school day at the same time Magma workers started their workday and ended their day at 4:00 p.m. same time Magma released it's wo rkers. The regimen was very part of my entire life until I graduated from high school and left for college.

Magma even permeated the school culture, I remember sitting in my classroom as a very young child and having the teacher ask "wh ich one of you shining start will receive the Magma scholarship when you graduate from high school, although we didn't k now what a scholarship was at that point, we were asked the same question every year so that it didn't take long to realize that this "sch olarship" was what you were working for in school. The older we got the more competitive we all became, we soon became aware of the significance of a full-ride scholarship. This phenomenon made us aware of the importance of working hard and getting good grades for the purpose of getting into college (of course there was much coercion from parents, we just didn't d o this because we were great kids).

Superior was a small mining town where the majority of citizens believed in the philosophy "it takes a whole village to raise a child." Magma built a state of the arts recreational center for workers' families. The center opened at 4:30 weekdays and 8:30 on Saturday. Before we could participate in any of the activities we had to attend presentations given by Magma middle management staff on topics ranging from proper etiquette to the advantages of education. The citizens of Superior were not afraid to scold you and make you behave in public. Your parents would know the entire story regarding any type of misbehavior before you walked in your front door.

My parents were both very loving and very supportive. Mom would have all three of her children do affirmations facing the mirror every morning before we left school. She would make us repeat the following phrase, "I k now what I do today will be for the right reason. I know I am capable and I know I can handle whatever comes my way." I have maintained this practice throughout my personal life.

Education

I started my college career at an urban State University, I attended two semesters when I met my first husband. He was doing his student teaching internship in Phoenix, by the end of the summer I found myself transferring to another state University to be with him. Transferring was the best thing I could have done. I met wonderful, caring, supportive instructors, who went out of their way to make sure you attended class. I developed some long lasting relationships with many of my former professors.

I signed my first teaching contract in Winslow, Arizona. I commuted my first two years to Flagstaff twice a week to work on my Masters degree. I taught 6th grade for two years and Special Reading for one year. Winslow was a wonderful place to work but I decided I wanted to move to Phoenix.

Entering School Administration

I interviewed at Murphy District for and assistant principal's p osition, the superintendent asked my viewpoint regarding bilingual education. I told him I did not believe in it, stating students should go through immersion in order to be more successful. He did not hire me as an assistant principal, but he did offer me a teaching position. I accepted and he assigned me to a third grade bilingual classroom. I had no experience teaching bilingual children, I remember staying up nights researching effective

strategies and methodologies for teaching these children. During that year the superintendent came to visit my classroom several times to see how I was doing. The beginning of the second year in the district, he came in to see me and asked me how I felt about Bilingual Education, I responded that it was the toughest thing I had ever done, but I was a believer, and understood how imperative it was for children to learn foundational skills in their own language before attempting to learn English. In November, he assigned me as interim principal. At the end of the school year, he asked me if I would take the principalship at the same elementary school. I stayed at Murphy district for a total of four years. The superintendent has remained my friend and mentor throughout my professional career.

I was hired in the Dysart Unified School District as an assistant principal for a new middle school. The district advertised for planning principals. Opening up a school was the best experience I have ever had. Luckily, Phoenix Preparatory had just opened and the principal there at the time would share some of the problems they were facing, simple things like beginning school and forgetting to order clocks for the classrooms. Furniture, equipment, and supplies were not delivered on time. The principal and I got to hire our own staff, which was in tune with a true middle school philosophy. The school was divided into four pods with seven classrooms, seven teachers and 200 students in each pod. Each grade level shared a common patio, where they constructed a bird aviary and raised cockatiels and lovebirds, assembled a greenhouse and learned about propagations, and built a fishpond. The eighth grade curriculum called for Life Science. The seventh grade science curriculum physical science, the patio had a simulated outer space project that displayed different backgrounds for studying the characteristics of outer space.

Class scheduling incorporated different clubs. Clubs included yearbook, school paper, school council, National Junior Honor Society, Jr. ROTC, ham radio, dance, art, woodshop, etiquette, culture, writing, sewing, cooking. There were after school sports and clubs would meet for activities after school as needed. The idea was to keep students to busy to get into trouble. My experience at Dysart Middle School was very valuable and very rewarding. It was very hard work and very long hours.

Shortly after that, the school was running so smoothly that I soon felt that there was no challenge, so I applied for a central office position and was promoted to that, to the position, without a problem. I worked in tandem with the assistant superintendent as the academic support director. I was very fortunate to work with a person who placed no restraints on me or my abilities. I learned so much from this position. I traveled all over the United States, and was given the opportunity to visit schools with effective programs. My job was to come back to the district, report my findings to the cabinet and to the teachers and principals. I did a lot of teacher training and staff development. I trained principals, also.

I resigned from that position in 1998 to move to Alaska. I traveled to Alaska in April and applied for a principalship at Northern Lights Elementary School in the Anchorage district. I was offered a contract. My sister, a registered nurse, and I made plans to move to Alaska together. I sold my home and, as we were preparing to make the move, actually, she suffered a serious heart attack. I could not leave her by herself. She's my little sissy, so I stayed. I had no home, no job, nor any job prospects at this time.

However, I was looking through the paper one day and I did find a job advertisement for a principalship in the County Regional School District. I applied, interviewed, and was hired in August of 1998. I started my career in the East Valley, at a middle school. I was transferred at the end of the year to an elementary school serving a homeless population of children, and transferred again in March to the district office. I must say, working for County Regional School District has given me a multitude of educational experiences.

Administration and Oppositional Behaviors – The Principal of an Alternative School

The next story concerns the principal at one of the "alternative schools" which serves children that have been excluded or self-selected out of traditional school environments. Her story is one of her own opposition to authority.

Opposition to Authority as Motivation for Leadership: Personal and Political Power in Becoming a School Principal

Growing Up

You know, a lot of people would think that my background is not too extensive, being that I'm 30 years old and an administrator, but I think it is. I think it has all the makings for a TV miniseries, if I do find that many people would find my life very interesting and why a young person such as myself would be an administrator. I mean, I've had some people say, "What is it? To stroke your ego or..." just very, you know, odd comments, because you don't always see a 30 year old administrator. Heck, though, I was an administrator at 24, which, you know, looking back six years now, I too, think that was pretty odd, but understanding my background, I think people can understand why it is that I became a principal. I always had the desire to be a teacher, but my teachers would tell me that there's no money in it and so, you know, I looked into pharmacy and I started that and I really hated it and I wanted to teach Italian. I always loved the language.

I am Italian. I took it for four years in high school. I did some doctoral work in Italy. But, I didn't think there was too much of a market for Italian teachers and I'm very proud of my heritage. I was born in Chicago Heights, Illinois, in 1970, and my parents and their parents, also, resided in Chicago Heights, so I have a great deal of pride. I feel very united, tied to the community where I was born and raised. This is where I was born, went to school, became a teacher, assistant principal and a principal. I guess it all starts back with my parents. My father is an Italian and he lived in Chicago Heights in a little section of town called Hungry Hill. That's where a lot of people moved from Europe and worked in the steel mills and my mother lived about a mile away from him on Chicago Road. When they met, it was the only man that my mother ever dated; she met him when she was twelve. And married him at eighteen and kept that pretty much a secret from her parents. Being that my mother was a Slovak, a Polish Slovak, they weren't too happy with my father. They figured all Italians were, you know, bad people, the *Black Hand*, and a lot of that was true.

There was a great deal of Mafia and corruption in Chicago Heights. Many of our people, political people are now in prisons, including our former mayor. And to get anywhere in Chicago Heights, you had to be Republican, albeit my father was a Republican and he had an eighth grade education. He dropped out of high school, the same high school I went to, Bloom, when he didn't make the cut of the basketball team for political reasons. And being so frustrated, he, you know, dropped out and found himself doing things that a lot of children growing up don't do. He lived a pretty corrupt life. He was heavy into gambling, never any alcohol. In fact, he hardly ever touches a drink, but he gambled poker, you name it. Chicago Heights was

a town notorious for gambling, illegal gambling, and that was associated with Mafia and a lot of people knew my father because everybody back in Chicago Heights knows everybody else. I always got a little bit of a reputation of my father being this corrupt, even though he was known as a pillar of the community, and basketball coach in the Lutheran school where I attended. But, there's always a great deal of corruption because people just associated him with gambling; it never really was too much of a big deal for me because I figured it's people's money, so they could do with it what they wanted, at least I thought that way while I was growing up.

But, you know, growing up was a little bit different because I didn't grow up like normal children did because of my father's lifestyle. Even though I know things weren't on the up and up, I knew that he would do anything to help his children. And that he did. He put his eldest son through Cornell, at the top his class. And my other brother graduated at the top of his class, too, from Michigan State University. And then there was me. I was the only girl, and not so fond of education. I was more like a rebel, like my father, growing up. My brothers had the privilege of being raised by my mother. She was at home and I guess, six years after my brother John was born, I was a surprise. And my mother was already working during that time and they didn't want another child, but they were very happy that they had a girl. And so, my father raised me. My father would have his gambling games going on and, you know, I knew how to count money at a very young age. I would go to the racetrack. I knew the people that are now that are in jail for corruption, I grew up around that. I didn't think much of it. I always just thought people associated, you know, Mafia with someone that would kill you, the *Black Hand*, but it wasn't like that growing up. And my father was a pillar of the community in the sense that, he'd do anything to help you. He was always very active in my brothers' lives, especially, when they were in basketball, sports and academics. He was always behind them, including me, but I didn't show too much interest in academics. He always says I'm his biggest surprise. But, I was really touched how my father, being an eighth grade graduate, got us all through school and would just do anything for his children.

So, be it as it may that there's some darkness to my background, or my family's background and maybe not everything was on the up and up, the values were there and I was raised with values. I was also raised with the fact that I didn't want to live a life where I had to worry. I wanted to make it on my own, but I learned early that Republicans were in power in Chicago Heights and if you wanted to get anywhere in Chicago Heights, you had to be Republican and you know, do favors for the Republican party, such as get signatures and the like and my dad was very active and very well respected by the Republicans in Chicago Heights. And from this, he obtained a position with the state. That's not too easy to do with an eighth grade education and making fairly decent money when he got his life in order. Well, it was always in order in a sense, but when he decided that he wanted to live a straighter life, because when you do things that are not on the up and up, you live your life in fear.

Even though I had the intelligence, I dreaded school. I can remember when I was in school in third grade, the Lutheran school, which I attended for nine years in Chicago Heights, and everybody knew

everybody, I asked a question about a teacher. I said something to the effect that all kids had to learn how to ice skate when they were two years old. And I was thinking, "Well, gosh, what if they have a broken leg, what if they don't want to?" And I raised my hand and I said, "All students?" And she yelled at me and said, "Yes, all students! Don't you listen? You know, you must be stupid!" And I never raised my hand until I was a freshman because it hurt me so that I got yelled at, so it scared me. And that made me more than anything else, not like school; it made school a negative experience. Even though you knew that the teachers loved you and they cared about you, they were very, very hard on you and I just didn't like it. And, I thought maybe that I could become a teacher and I'd be different. I'd make a difference. I'd never yell at anybody or make anybody feel stupid for asking a question. There were no stupid questions. I wanted the students to enjoy coming to school, be serious students but to enjoy. I wanted to create places where students weren't dreading it like I had for all those years. It was those bad experiences that were detrimental to me for many, many years, even scarred me for life. I'd love to meet that teacher again who scolded me and made my third grade year definitely a hell year; made me not want to study and ask questions because of fear. I don't think that's good. So, it's real important that people are comfortable around me. And I sense the students are.

I can remember in eighth grade, my father was indicted and possibly on his way to jail. And from that point on, even though I saw him obtain money easily, I knew that the key to success was a good education and doing good. But, yet, I had this great sense of loyalty to Chicago Heights because this is, you know, where I was born and raised. And I saw a lot of people in gangs, I saw a lot of violence. Even though this wasn't in my family, I saw things changing in Chicago Heights, and I can remember driving by a school in Chicago Heights and saying, "Boy, wouldn't it be cool to be a teacher there? Wouldn't it be cool to be a principal there?" Just twenty-something years later, that came to be. I always remained loyal to the Republican in Chicago Heights because they believed in me. In high school, I wasn't as focused as I could have been, but I decided I wanted a college education.

College and Entry into Education

That was a definite and that's where I met my first, and my ex-husband, Chris. My teachers told me not to become a teacher because the money wasn't there, so I decided to go into pharmacy school and I took all the chemistry and I had a strong science background. I seemed to test high in that area, but I hated it and then I just figured I'd pay the tuition, even if I got D's, I'd get the degree. I didn't really care much. I just really cared about enjoying life and this future husband of mine made a comment to one of my friends, that this girl isn't going to be anything with her attitude and somehow that touched me and angered me at the same time. But, from that moment on, that's when I became the little genius and became the straight A student and went all the way through a doctorate. I think it was his comments. He's the one who showed me how to work the computer, how to research the internet; he's the one who taught me how to study. So, I am forever indebted to what he's taught me. Because I do consider myself a late bloomer. I was always ahead of my years. I always

wanted to be older than I was and, but it was Chris who taught me to focus and that's I did.

And another lady came up to me and said, "You know, Allison, you'd be a great teacher." And I said, "You know, that's what I wanted to do. So, forget the money. Let me go into teaching." So, I changed majors and even got rid of the science and went with English. I used the science and English background when I graduated and I became a teacher. Actually, the first place I looked for a position was Chicago Heights because I wanted to work where I was born, and even that seemed to be very political because the person that was my cooperating teacher was very envious of me. She was about 32 years old at the time and the kids really liked me. I was real active in the community and it seemed that she was a little bit jealous of my success. And she went to the Superintendent and she badmouthed me when she knew I was going to be applying for a position there. I don't know really why she did it. Most people do feel that there was a sense of jealousy because I knew I was a damn good teacher. I knew that the kids liked me and that I was strong. And I think she wanted me to feel indebted to her, that she was molding me, and when I took the liberty of scheduling an interview without telling her, this upset her.

And our Superintendent at the time was also born and raised in Chicago Heights and knew my father and it got back around to me that she had blackballed me. She was sort of, not dating, so much, but the former Superintendent kind of had this reputation as a ladies' man and this cooperating teacher had a way of charming him. He had said that she had talked badly about me, and it all came out. And there was another district at the same time that was very interested in hiring me that paid more. But I didn't want that position. I wanted the Chicago Heights position because this lady had angered me so. And, so the Mayor and the Board endorsed me, and the Superintendent still had very much ties to this women, the cooperating teacher. He tried to be the heavy and not hire me because he had promised her. I later found this out, years later, and it became a battle. It came to the point where he was no longer superintendent. It was a pretty bad issue. He was a corrupt man, but that really ticked me off more than anything. I came to be victorious and I became a teacher at the school, a fifth grade teacher, and I remained there for three years.

But, my mother always said, "The best type of revenge that you can do is just be successful," so I put my energies into just being successful and my students, you know, loved me. And at first, you know, any activity there was, I was involved in. And then they got, my interests were outside my classroom. I started getting interested in special ed and other classrooms and my students said, you know, I'm more like the principal than the principal is because of how active I was and that hit a cord with me and I decided from that point on that I wanted to be a principal.

Entry in School Administration

So, I signed up for school my second year of teaching to become a principal. And I did that in a year and a half. And simultaneously, my husband was a police officer and we would form the violence prevention groups. He would do a group with the junior police that I formed there. I'd get the kids jackets and they'd do patrol, just so

many great things together. And then I became vice principal in 1995 for the same district, moved right into that position, wasn't too much of a difficulty there. It was more difficult to become the teacher than it was to become the vice principal of a junior high. A lot of people, you know, at that time were making comments about my age, being that I was 24, 25 years old and moving up. But, yet, they knew me, they knew of my family. They also knew that I was a hard worker. They knew that I cared. They knew that my husband was a pillar of the community and very giving in the community. And so I proved myself as an assistant principal and then the following year, I became a principal, still very, very young. I finished my Master's degree, and I simultaneously signed up for a doctoral degree, to the dismay of my husband at the time. He had worked such long hours, anything that was extra he would do it.

And I threw myself into work and into school, probably 90 hours a week. Everything was work and school and community and so my marriage started to disintegrate for various reasons. but a lot of the students that I would teach during the day, he would arrest at night, and I would be looking at the roots of what makes them do what they do and he would be saying that they were…I forget the word that he used, but something derogatory…mutants, I think that's what he called them. Mutants. And so we'd get into fights about that and I think he got a little bit envious that I was doing so much schooling so fast and he moved up to detective, but he was the true…he was the true smart one. He should have been a doctor. He started out as a pharmacist, as did I. You know, work three, four jobs, and the goal was that I would graduate and then I'd put him through. Well, when it came time for me to put him through, he was really wrapped up in being a police officer and a narcotics detective and a SWAT detective and he was really active in police work and was awesome at it. But, the marriage itself was going pretty bad.

It was 1995, towards the end of my doctorate that I decided that I wanted to go to Italy and Rome. Loyola was located out there and that was where I went to school. And I took some coursework out there to finish early and learn Italian because that is my background, my heritage. I went to Italy and I studied out there and when I came back, I was going through a divorce. My husband and I had to live in Chicago Heights because he was a police officer there and police officers had to live there. I could live anywhere I wanted to live, and as much as I love Chicago Heights, he had said to me, "Allison, you can go anywhere you want to go now." And I thought, "Oh my gosh, this is true." So, I decided to take a sabbatical out in Oregon and do some research on violence prevention because that was my background. And I really loved it out there. It rained quite a bit, and I decided in the end, that it wasn't for me. Loyola was asking me to come back and I thought it would be easier for me to finish my doctorate if I did come back. I took sabbatical time and decided that I wanted to move, so I was interested in California. I liked nice weather. So, I went out to California and I really liked it and someone else had told me about Arizona and I went out there and I really, really liked it. I loved the homes and how inexpensive they were, compared to Chicago. And I decided that Arizona was for me and I packed up my Blazer with all my belongings and moved out here all by myself.

Administration and Administrative Philosophy

This is when I obtained a position with the County Regional Schools. It had to be at an "at risk" school. It had to be alternative education because those are where my passions are. I feel that's where my forte is because I like working with the underdog. I like working with children whose needs are not being met, so I could be resourceful and help them. I find that more rewarding, to help those students that don't have everything handed to them. I think that's probably why when I interviewed with some of the wealthier districts, you know, my answers to their questions were probably a little shocking of, you know, concerning what I've dealt with. And I don't think a lot of schools are willing to accept that they have a problem with gangs and violence. But they do, and I just didn't feel comfortable there. But, I've had a wide variety of experiences in the County Regional Schools, including working with the homeless, which I found to be very rewarding.

Currently, I am principal at a middle school, working with students that are deficient in areas of academics, minor discipline, and issues with attendance. And it's been rewarding trying to obtain resources for these students who have some disadvantages, and who are at risk. And one of the greatest things that have happened is the Century 21 Grant, which allows us to extend the school day, and originate so many great projects. I feel that this is my calling, to help students who maybe don't have everything that you would find in a traditional student, such as parents that love them, supportive home life; a lot of these kids don't have that. They come from broken homes. What I find so rewarding is that when there are issues – past abuse, neglect, lower grades, failure – we have an opportunity to do whatever it takes to make these children happy and to become contributing members of society. And that's what I found back in Chicago Heights. A lot of these kids didn't have anything going their way. To work with them, and to have the ability to get resources to help them and see their little faces happy, was just so euphoric, better than any drug that I could imagine. Helping someone is such an incredible feeling.

Back in Chicago Heights, I had a great deal of freedom, being that, you know, I had a Republican background. I was on the Police Board, was appointed by the Mayor for the Violence Prevention Board. I was so incredibly active in the community. I was a Jr. Woman's Member. Anything that I wanted to help children, I knew how to get. And I found myself doing very creative things, along with my ex-husband, to help youths. When I came out to Arizona, I didn't know anybody and so it took a little while for me to get used to it. It's a whole new world out here. And you know, I'm not that familiar with the dynamics in this area like I was in Chicago Heights. Inside and out, I was successful there. I'm hoping that, you know, I can make this my home. I love the weather. I can't even tell you how much better the weather is out here than it is in Chicago, when it's forty below and you're heating up your car for an hour before you go to work. But, I still see the same issues that I saw in Chicago Heights and I think I'm getting better at being resourceful.

Administration as the 'Golden Rule.' I preach the Golden Rule to

my students. You treat people the way that you want to be treated and I do believe good things will happen to those that do their best to become positive role models. I do see a lot of goodness in my students especially when they help each other. We have new students coming in and out all the time and the veteran students help the new students and it's very touching. And I do see a tremendous amount of empathy among them. And they're very lovely children. It's unfortunate that because we're in an alternative school, a lot of people associate those students as being bad children. But there are no bad children. They're children that made a few poor choices. And who hasn't? I was very much a late bloomer so I think I have a tremendous amount of empathy.

Being that I'm a young administrator, people sometimes get the wrong idea of why I'm an administrator. But, I was always that type of person that you couldn't tell me no. You couldn't say no to me or tell me that I couldn't do that. When they told me I couldn't be an administrator because I was too young, so don't even bother trying, I tried, and I became a principal. When they told me at Loyola that I was too young to go into a doctoral program, to take my superintendent certificate, and to take those classes that went along with it, they said that they expected me to do very high on some type of a test and I said, "Oh, I can do that." And I did it. And they said I would never finish because it would be too grueling because I hadn't had that many life experiences. And I graduated with a 4.0 and I was one of the first to graduate from the licensure program, even though I'm still ABD. And I told them I would do that. I told them that I would be one of the first to finish and that I would graduate with a 4.0 because I was committed and I wanted it. And I was one of the youngest certified superintendents in the nation, especially with a 4.0 GPA. I think I might be one of only ones from such a prestigious university. I was one of the stellar students and I'm proud of it. I worked hard and I always had to work a little bit harder because of my age. I deserved it.

You know I'm proud of what I accomplished. I guess, as I get older, I won't have to worry as much. Every year I get fewer and fewer questions about "Are you really an administrator?" And if I can accomplish what I achieved, anybody can accomplish if your mind and your heart and your soul are with it. That's what I preach to these at risk children, that they can to whatever they want to do and if I can help them reach that goal, it's mutually reinforcing. If they achieve, if they win, I win. And that's the advantage of working with at-risk group and I wouldn't have it any other way. You know, people say, "Why don't you go to school now that you have all this experience and work for one of the wealthier districts?" To me, that's not as challenging. Those kids have things handed to them, even though I know they have issues. It's not as challenging as helping homeless or helping those that have had a really bad experience at the former school. Now you have them and you want to make it a positive experience for them. Sometimes I'm hard on these kids. Maybe they will go off to college, but maybe that's not their goal. But I want to have the resources for them, so that they can become productive members of society.

You know, a lot of the kids think that it's academics that should be stressed. To me, it's more important that they grow up to be good people, giving people in the community. Grades are not everything. I

mean, how good is it to be a straight "A" student and murderer? I would rather have someone that works really hard, and maybe obtains "Cs", but gives back to the community and makes a difference in someone's life. And so, if I can affect someone's life in a positive manner, maybe they can take what they've learned from me and from their teachers, who are phenomenal, and do that for somebody else. And I see a lot of that going on at East Valley. I see that the kids are helping each other and I see a lot of good energy at the school and my future will always be like I was once told, if you just help someone once every day and just do something nice for them, you know, it'll come back. And I find that when I am working; it is my goal to continue doing good and at least attempting to do good and attempting to make a positive impact on someone's life.

Living the Good Life: Visions of the Personal and Professional

The Century 21 Grant allows us to extend the school day; we're providing basketball and bats and gardening club, media club, and many after school activities that help children. Since we don't have all the resources that many traditional schools have, it's wonderful that this grant allows us to help the 130 students that I have. The school for the homeless has its own foundation and millions of contributors to help these children. The best thing about that school is that it had, it has, a wonderful name for itself and people want to donate. The school that I am currently administrator of doesn't really have a name, a true identity to it, as does the other school, but that's what makes it all more challenging. We're currently building partnerships, and I think what's going to come in the future will be phenomenal. I see myself finishing this doctorate because I've been ABD for four years and I really want to get that done. But every time I try to get something done, something drastic happens. For now, my energies are pretty much focused on my work. My parents followed me out to Arizona last year. They lived in Chicago Heights and they came to visit me and they loved it, too. My boyfriend out in the Chicago area came out here and loved it, too, so it seems like it's very contagious that people want to live in Arizona.

Since you have seven years, I see myself, hopefully, finishing this degree. I see myself eventually settling down and getting married again and raising a family and if there's any additional schooling in my life, I think it would be school law. I have a tremendous interest in school law. But, I also have been enjoying my normal recreation. I've met some wonderful people out here, including another administrator, who really believed in me and gave me a chance. She's a wonderful person. And, you know, I kind of believe in fate. I think you meet people for a reason and I think that my calling is here. Someone once told me, "Allison, if you just help one person a day, your world would be a lot better." And so I live by that. If I can help just one person every day, just do something nice for one person, as little as it may be, it's just a wonderful feeling. Those are words to live by.

Allison's shares her own anti-authority sentiments growing up, and in school.

Her schooling experience raises the issue her own sensitivity to criticism and the

damaging effects of a culture of criticism that pervades many schools. Her resistance helps to salvage her own reputation, and self-esteem. Her subsequent achievement allows her to beat "them" at their own game. Not by accident, the student population that she works with in the alternative school displays the very same behaviors that she exhibited while growing up. The difference, perhaps, was a supportive father, with resources to minimize the damage and penalties of her youth, while providing opportunities for future successes.

The next story is a brief excerpt from a principal that was relieved of his responsibility as principal at the end of the school year. His story considers the importance of mentoring in a career as a teacher, doctoral student, and school administrator.

Leadership and Mentoring

Growing Up

As a small boy I was strongly influenced by my parents and my mother's parents. This is easy to appreciate considering that I am an only child and my grandparents frequently cared for my when my parents were working. My father worked in the U.S. Post Office; my mother worked in the U.S. General Services Administration.

An important first memory as a child was my parents and grandparents regularly reading. My father read two or three newspapers daily, my mother was an avid readier of novels, my grandfather read works of history and my grandmother read numerous magazines. I saw reading as a natural and regular part of what people did everyday. A story in my family goes that when I came home from my first day of kindergarten was that I asked my mother whether I was not ready for college.

Going to School

In school I enjoyed history and social studies, probably because my family so often talked about politics at home. My grandfather was a staunch democrat, and at the turn of the century was a socialist. As a teenager he was friendly with people that have been active in the Molly Maguires. My Grandfather talked about once voting for a presidential candidate who was serving a prison term at the time of election. I think it was natural seeing education as being an expression of knowledge about the community, state, and nation. As a seventh grader when we were having a career exploration unit, I said that I wanted to be a teacher. When I was laughed at, I wouldn't talk about being a teacher anymore, but I kept thinking about it often.

In high school I had poor vision and the only sport I could really excel at was swimming. I wanted a letter sweater in the worst way, and to this day I think of how my high school started a swimming team

the year after I graduated. Any thoughts of an athletic scholarship were stopped, and that didn't take much effort. High school was all right, but was not a high point of great memories.

I attended Glendale Community College as an undergraduate and enjoyed the experience. A number of instructors, still there today, occupy pleasant memories of great learning experiences. Besides history, I came to enjoy philosophy, psychology, and sociology as well. When I transferred to Arizona State University what I was going to do was never in question, I would become a teacher. I enjoyed my experiences in the A.S.U. College of Education, and worked with many good instructors that gave me worthwhile experiences. One instructor, Dr. Nelson Haggerson is still a friend and mentor. Though I don't see him often, Dr. Robert Stahl was also helpful, introducing me to the art of presentations, especially with the National Council of Social Studies.

I student taught at Mesa High School under and old war-horse by the name of Warren Wells. Mr. Wells helped me have a solid experience and helped me understand the responsibilities of the profession. On completion of student teaching however, it took two years to land my first contract as a middle school social studies teacher at Apache Elementary School in the Scottsdale Public Schools.

Teaching, Doctoral Studies and Entry in School Administration

My first years in the profession were great. Dale Foote, an Arizona Teacher of the Year, mentored me. Dale was my next door neighbor teaching math, and was always helpful and helped my maturity in the profession on a nearly daily basis. I still say today that anyone who can be a success in middle school can probably be successful at any level. When I had the chance to transfer and be a part of the new Chaparral High School Faculty I did so eagerly. I taught at Chaparral High School and Saguaro High in Scottsdale and to this day I can say that I enjoyed the experience, and the experiences I had in the district.

In 1987 I went through a difficult and messy divorce that still in some ways haunts me. I was fortunate however to meet a wonder in 1988, and began a relationship and marriage that still lasts and prospers today. After marrying in 1988 I was encouraged by my new wife to finish a doctoral program. It would require me to leave Scottsdale schools and that took no small amount of courage. However, I made the decision, relocated to Flagstaff, and began work as a lecturer at the College of Education and be a full time doctoral student. At CEE a number of interesting and provocative individuals influenced me. All these folks had a positive influence on my program in someway. For example, when writing comprehensive examinations one of my exams was on the sociology of education. Four other people wrote on the sociology of education as well, but took the class the semester before I did. I had no background on the question I received, but somehow, I passed that part of the comprehensive exam. I was either lucky, or perhaps others were taken in with my charming personality. (Earlier I mentioned I had poor vision. In Flagstaff I had RK surgery done, and for more that 10 years I was able to go without glasses. Though I now wear the darned things again, my vision is no where as bad as it once was.)

I successfully defended my dissertation in April of 1993. Realistically my dissertation is probably gathering dust in some corner of the Cline Library, but I was proud of finishing it, and being able to put letters after my name. In June of 1993, Ann and I began a fairly long sojourn as gypsies, We moved to Oregon, then the Navajo reservation, then the western slope of Colorado, back to beautiful Gila Bend, Arizona and finally now as a Regional Principal for the Maricopa County Regional Schools. My position as a Regional Principal is due significantly to the encouragement and help provided by mentors. That help is now recognized and thanks offered. If I stretch, I can say that my career as a school administrator has been average. Prior to being regional Principal the schools I worked at were either troubled schools, or schools that were less the gems of desire for other administrators. I don't know what the future holds and perhaps that is the best. I am still not sure what I want to be when I grow up, and maybe the best thing is to just take one day at a time, and do the best I can.

Walt's story is also about personal growth and resilience. His graduate work and doctoral degree represent major events in his life. The entry into school administration seems less based on commitment to serve, than continuation of his own growth and learning that begins in college and continues through his graduate training and doctoral degree. However, his strengths may lie more in the intellectual arena concerning the study of schools and society than in the administrative practice domain, which requires a different set of skills, temperament, and energy.

The next story also looks at an administrator who spent years in the classroom prior to entry into administration. Her commitment to be an administrator and to learning is based on a service ethic; she connects professional development with her own personal growth as teacher and administrator.

Learning by Doing: Work Ethic and Administration

Growing Up

I was born in Manhattan, New York. My family spent about five years on Eastern Avenue in the Bronx. Then my family did the " White Flight" thing and moved to Queens. Mostly, It was similar to Phoenix. We lived in a little village called Belrose. It had an active local government and all types of civic activities, nothing special, just what everybody else had.

I went through public school all the way. I attended PS133 in Queens. That was considered to be one of the top schools at that time. That was based on high test scores. I went to junior high when I entered 7th grade. That was an interesting experience because it was the first time I was in school with so much diversity. All different types of schools fed into my junior high school; it was a 7th, 8th, and 9th grade school. It was an interesting mix of kids, a mix of high performing kids and not performing kids. I think that was my first real taste of public education. I look back and think about how rigid it was and how incompetent I think the administration was. I met a lot of really nice people going through school. I was a fairly typical teen- the normal hormonal thing that every junior high school kid does! I went through the motions without really learning much. When I finished junior high I entered Martin Van Buren Highs School, also considered to be another teachers' school. It was a similar experience to my junior high days. It was actually a bit better, looking back at it from a professional perspective. It certainly offered a more diverse course field- music, foreign language and sports. I was on the volleyball team, played the clarinet, and took German. I also worked after school. I would say I was a pretty typical student.

I was a big teacher, a teacher from the " get-go." I think my mother would never have allowed me to be anything else but a teacher. My mother had become a stay-at-home

mom so when I got home from school, she sat with me for two or three hours a day if that' s what it took to write your reports, art projects, or whatever. I wasn' t a great student, like my sister, but I did alright. I had to struggle, learn and re-learn. Fortunately, my mother was very complimentary of my learning. I was a " goody-two-shoes," o n the student council and obeyed all the rules. I never cut class-not even as a senior! I dealt with authority well, until I was out of high school. I don' t deal with it now as well as I did when I was younger. I definitely do a lot of questioning. I have to understand now. Back then we just took orders and did what we were told. I lived in Queens all through junior high and high school and at nineteen decided to strike out on my own, since the ideals of my parents and mine differed. My parents still live there. After moving out, I attended the State University of New York at Stonybrook. After graduation I went into teaching. I spent a good 29 years in New York before moving out here to Phoenix.

My parents were both well educated. They attended college in New York at City University of New York City. At the same time they attended, anyone who was a resident of New York City went to college for free. My parents came from immigrant families so there was an automatic push to send your kids to college. It was, of course, the American Dream to have a better life than your parents. Next to buying a home, because my grandparents had never been able to, education was the focus of the family. The mission was to become " Americanized." M y mother was a nurse. She had graduated and was a practicing RN when my father went into accounting. He did one of those mid-life career changes and went back to school when I was still young. He went into anesthesia. My parents had an interesting view on life. Both being in the medical profession, we went to school even when we were sick. No matter what, you got up and went to school.

My grandfather was the most significant person in my life, my father' s father. I don' t know what it was, but we were very close. He encouraged me to think beyond the norm. He taught me about baseball. We watched baseball games together and he taught me how to play poker, collect stamps, and do really cool stuff together. Maybe it was just the luck of the draw, being the first born, and I was the apple of his eye. That was probably the most beneficial thing for me. He really built my self-esteem. I believed in myself because of him. After he passed away, I was able to carry that with me. That was a gift he gave me.

Entry into Teaching

I came out of college with actually nothing worthwhile, a degree in political science, which, of course, in the job market, equates to nothing. I' m not proud of how I became a teacher. I became a teacher because there was nothing else I could do with my degree. Also, because my mother was harassing me saying, " You are not going to stay here rent free!" My mother told me, " Go to the Board of Education, sign up and become a teacher." She told me that New York City was hiring teachers. She told me that all I had to do was fill out some paperwork, take an additional twelve credits and I would be able to teach. That' s exactly what I did.

A friend of mine from Girl Scout Camp called to tell me that the school she was teaching in needed substitutes badly, sort of like what our district deals with now. If you find a substitute you feel like you' re the big Pharaoh. My first job was in PS224 in eastern older section of Brooklyn: Number one in murder and number two in rape in the city. You couldn' t park your car beyond the front door. If you stayed until evening you needed a police escort to your car. The school was surrounded by pink housing- subsided housing. The area was one of the worst in New York City. The violence was incredible. The doors were locked because a parent came in and tried to stab one of the teachers. I kind of laugh when I listen to people complain about the problems out here. This is nothing. That was in

1983. Can you imagine what it is like now? My first day as a sub was interesting, to say the least. I believed that children sat in their chairs with their hands folded. I learned very quickly that I was mistaken. I think the only thing that sustained me throughout that year was that my friend kept bringing me hot coffee because she didn' t want me to leave. That year changed my life, as far as education was concerned.

I was eventually assigned to a fourth grade class. It was known as the Gates Class, meaning that if kids didn' t receive a third grade score on the standardized test, they could not be promoted. Some of my students were going through their 2nd and 3rd time in fourth grade. I was a brand new teacher with two teaching assistants. One of the assistants had a kid who constantly got lost and she would have to go and find him on the streets. She was away from the school on a daily basis. The other assistant got mad at me on a regular basis. She was an older woman and had been in education for years. She should have probably been the teacher- not me! My students just tore me apart! I would turn around and something would be burning in the back of the classroom. They' d be melting crayons on the radiator heater, throwing books outside the window, running downstairs and out the back door. I could see them out my classroom window three stories up! It was frustrating and horrible, a horrible time for me. I would take them out to go to the bathroom and when I looked back at them they would be break dancing all over the floor. That was the popular thing back then. I learned to love it there, as time went on, despite the fact that they didn' t learn a damn think in my class! And that' s one of my regret' s. I didn' t know anything about special education and that would have helped me a great deal. I found out the one of the kids, who I thought couldn' t write had 200/200 vision and was legally blind. I had kids who were mentally retarded. I think of those kids now and that is my focus, as far as my professional focus. Those kids' lives must have been hell. I can' t tell you how many times they' d come in crying because someone' s father had been beaten up or something horrible had happened in their lives. One student' s mother would come in to class all the time drunk and breathe alcohol in my face as she talked to me. The child was mortified. I would squeeze her hand to let her know that it was alright. I feel like I failed her. As a principal, I can look back now and say that the system failed her. I wasn' t properly trained to handle the situations I ran into. I know that many of them kept on going and I pray that they had someone more astute than me, later on in school, who was able to step in and do something for them. I loved that group of students. The whole school was crazy. The cafeteria was a madhouse! On the first day of school I went for materials and the supply closet was empty. The lady in the office looked at me and said, " Well, you should have gotten down here faster." I as ked when the supplies would be in and she said not for the rest of the year. This was a New York City School and there were no supplies! I found out years later that the principal was investigated for misuse of funds! That was my very first year of teaching!

Special education training as a road to learning to be a teacher. I taught next in Springfield Garderns, a high school in Springfield Gardens, New York. It was a neat middle class African-American community, very cool. The parents had phones. You could actually call them. That was a novelty for me. I was shocked to find out that the parents were actually involved in their child' s education. When I would call parents they would say things like, " He did what? I' ll be right down!" w hich was a whole new experience for me. This was the year I learned about special education. There was an audit and the special education department was in terrible shape. It took us months to fix things. The day we finished, the state called and told us they weren' t coming after all. It was a good experience for us anyway. I really learned. I learned about IEP' s writing goals and how to document, how to set meeting goals, testing and timelines. Good stuff for all teachers to know.

Next I was an English as a Second Language teacher in a special education department. None of my kids could speak English. Again, I had no formal training. I was so grateful that I had friends to call to ask what to do. I had the EH (emotionally handicapped) kids. There is no bigger trip than teaching emotionally handicapped kids who can' t understand a word you are saying! Talk about fun! I did have a scary moment working there. I had a boy in my class who was into drugs. His pager went off and he got up to leave class. I stood in front of the doorway and told him that he' d have to go through me to leave. He debated for a minute or two. We just stood there looking at each other and then he sat down. For some reason the kids and I sort of clicked at that point and the power struggle was over. This boy, especially, never gave me any trouble. He was later expelled for assaulting another teacher. I had another kid who was having a real bad time. He had just lost his mother and was lost without her. He got into a bad crowd and got into a bad fight. The only person who was there was me. He respected me enough to allow me to step in and break up the fight. The administration wanted me to write him up and do all the things that needed to be done to remove him from school. I don' t know why, but I refused, first time ever. I refused to do as I was told. A few weeks later, I came in to class really late. With 3,000 kids in the school it was sometimes difficult to get to class on time. Sitting in the back of my room were all the top brass, ready to observe me. I had no idea they were coming. They were from the district office. They said they were there to observe me and see how I was working out. The kid I had helped out pulled out an article and began this whole discussion on the article. He gave me time to regroup and pull it together. He made it sound like something we had planned and had been discussing, which we never had. He knew all the right things to say too. I' ll never forget that. I became certified during that time going to Queens College. I received my state certification and joined suburbia at Lindenhurst High School as a social studies teacher, teaching ninth and eleventh grades. I worked there for a couple of years, and unfortunately learned that social studies teachers were a dime a dozen. I was laid off due to lack of enrollment. Sound familiar?

I then moved to Phoenix because I heard a rumor that there was a teacher shortage. Not true, but I worked in special education for Phoenix Union High School District. I subbed at Cartwright Elementary and eventually landed at West Valley High School. I worked for Robert Trujillio. He was very loyal to his people. When there was an opening in the grants department in our district, he went to bat for me to fill the position. Robert refused to leave the superintendent' s office until he agreed to put me in the position. The superintendent said, " She has a month, two months to prove herself. She will have to learn the job on her own. If she can do it, then she can have the job". I s pent the whole summer – mega headaches every night – learning grants. Thank God things worked in my favor and I was able to stay in the position. I was only at West Valley for less than a year. The students thought I was really tough. I did become a tough teacher, no smiles 'til F ebruary! I believe in structures because I believe I believe that kids appreciate structure. It' s safety to them. I believe in basics, because many kids haven' t had someone to teach them basics. Our students are not just average. They just haven' t had someone teach them. That' s why we are here. The highest compliment I received, though, was at the end of the year when the kids told the principal that I was the only teacher who taught them anything and the only one who believed they could learn. Too many times they were given a " free ride". I thought the kids there were a piece of cake compared to the ones I had in New York. Now, I think I see more and more of the New York thing coming here to Phoenix – drugs, violence, etc.

<u>Entry in School Administration</u>

I decided to become an administrator out of frustration. I believe that a school' s job is to educate the whole child. I saw kids who couldn' t learn because they were hungry, or

because of terrible things that happened to them the night before. They were so far behind. An administrator has the ability to set the vision, to take a look at what' s going on and to make the necessary arrangements to help the situation. For me, personally, I wanted to be in a position where I could let teachers teach and be the child' s advocate and I would do the dirty work, making sure that the children had what they needed so that the teachers could teach. I saw myself as this controlling administrator who needed to have things done in a certain way, but I learned to facilitate. I learned how to involve people so that they became excited and the project was their own. This is very interesting to me.

My high point in my career was when I was painting and I fell and hurt myself. I was out of work for three weeks. When I came back, everything was done just as I would have done it. The staff had bought in to everything so much that they carried right on without me. That was the greatest moment in my administrative career. I learned that you could facilitate and tell people and not be afraid far how far they will go. It gave me confidence. If your staff buys into things, and they do the social bonding thing, it' s very rewarding and fun to watch them go. That is exciting to me. That was, believe it or not, one of my highlights in administration.

Learning to be a school administrator. One thing I learned more quickly as an administrator was that politics affects just about every single thing you do as an administrator. That' s been my struggle. It' s taken an enormous amount of discipline to learn to separate what happens on a district level from the school level, keeping what happens at a district level from falling into the classroom; not letting it affect the quality of teaching; not letting it affect morale. It means sometimes being the bad guy. Instead of saying, " Well, so and so told me we have to do this and that," y ou have to say, " I decided we' re going to do this and that." Ev erybody gets to be mad at you. But, number one, I believe in this district and number two, whether my staff knows it or not, I protect them. It' s a hard role, leadership, because sometimes you are alone, a lot of time actually. It is a middle management position. You are stuck in the middle. You try to marry the expectations of one level with the needs of another level and it' s a hard match, a really hard match. I think the beauty of the struggle, though, is that it made me a stronger person. It allowed me to develop my self-confidence and be willing to stand up to any kind of criticism. Leadership means developing a vision and doing everything possible to make that vision come true. It means getting into the politics. It means climbing over the gossip. It means protecting yourself and your staff, empowering your faculty and your staff and giving everybody what they need to be successful. I' ve learned that from being a principal. Until you' ve experienced it, no one can teach it to you.

I think education is like being a parent. I take my role and my responsibilities very seriously. You need to assess the needs of the students at your particular school and then meet those needs. I am a proponent of holistic education. I think we have to educate the whole child. In order to educate the whole child, you have to have the whole picture. That means setting up partnerships, getting a nurse, going to an agency and begging for dental care, providing snacks, etc. I deal with a population that suffers from diabetes, so I bring in nutrition specialists. You do whatever you need to do so that you clear any obstacle that prevents students from learning. My philosophy is back to basics. I believe in reading, math, and writing. I believe in students being given the opportunity to achieve to their highest ability. Those three subjects should be integrated into whatever we are teaching – social studies, science, etc. I want all kids to have the opportunity to learn.

I haven' t really had another career except education. I worked while I went to college from 2pm to 10pm every night allowing me to go to school in the mornings. I worked for an awesome guy, an ordained Pentecostal minister. He allowed me to study in a hole-in

the-wall room for a couple of hours helping me pull through work and school. I was very fortunate. Because of this job, I drive my custodians crazy. I can tell if something hasn' t been mopped in three days because of the way the circles form. Crazy stuff. Outside of that job, I have only been in education.

When I retire I am going to travel. Hopefully I will travel internationally. I am also a big believer in volunteering. Where, I don' t know, but I will continue to volunteer. Maybe in a dog shelter, working in schools, but wherever, I will be volunteering. Oh and my ten thousand dogs will be with me too! Actually, I only have 9 dogs, all the homeless ones I found out and around the reservation, while working at Estrella Mountain School!

Janice's story reveals some of her early experiences and socialization as a teacher. These experiences contribute to her perspective of administration as service, and her own growth in appreciating what it takes to best serve the needs of children. Her sensitivity to children, especially those who have been placed at a disadvantage by traditional schools and life circumstances, gives her a mental toughness that allows her to manage the clearly difficult politics at the district in which she works.

Researchers' Disclosures and Stories of Professional Practice

These next two stories are our own stories. The sharing of our own narratives, as told through stories of personal growth and professional practice, was an integral part of the professional development exercises during the year. These stories present some of our learning, about schools, about administration, and about each other, that occurred during the year.

Coaching Leadership and Administrative Practice: A Professor's Story

I was born in Tolleson, AZ. World War II took my Father overseas. I was about five years old when he returned. Shortly thereafter my parents were divorced. I moved with my mom to West Texas, just across the state line from Hobbs New Mexico. I remember vividly my first day of school. A small plane crashed on the school grounds over the weekend. I recall seeing a piece of the tail wing in the middle of the schoolyard. Older kids were milling around looking for other parts of the plane musing about what might have happened if the plane had crashed into the school. That day is even more significant for me, because my Dad showed up at school and asked me to come live with him. My response was no - he was my hero - I don't know why I said no. Who

knows how kids make such decisions? This I do know, my life would have been much different had I chose to go with him. Perhaps not better - just different.

Early Experiences in School

Mrs. Jones was my first grade teacher. I remember thinking, "I'm going to remember her name, she's my first teacher." I didn't particularly like her; I just wanted to remember her name in case anyone asked me whom my first grade teacher was when I grew up. Elementary classrooms were quite traditional back then. The desks were in rows and bolted to the floor. The desk - tops had inkwells with considerable storage space under the top. You could put all kinds of good stuff in there, and I certainly kept my fair share of treasures there.

I wore Levis, as did most of the boys. I always arrived at school neat, clean and well pressed. I might not have stayed that way long, given the games we boys played at recess. However, I always took pride in being well groomed.

I remember debating with classmates about critical matters such as who was the best baseball player, Babe Ruth or Ty Cob! Another thing I recall was being jealous, because the girls were better athletes than us boys. They were better at dribbling basketballs, jumping rope, and they played kickball better than any boy in class. The humiliating part of first grade was that we were required to take naps after lunch. The boys had to strip down to their under shorts, believe it or not. The girls had to strip down as well. Boys were placed on one side of the room, the girls on the other side. It was embarrassing.

I don't remember a whole lot about the second grade other than riding the school bus, dealing with the cold weather, and that sort of thing. Third grade was far more interesting. Mrs. Elliot was my teacher. She had the most beautiful skin in the world, kind of an olive brown. She wore jewelry with colorful stones; topaz was one of the stones. The other one was blue, very clear, pretty. Her jewelry complemented her skin tone. In fact, it was just gorgeous. She wore her black hair back in a tight bun. She was very strict, perhaps even a bit mean. I thought she might be the meanest person you could ever run into. In fact, I did not like her.

Relationships, competency and respect. The root cause of my disaffection for Mrs. Elliot was this: She took a classmate's pencil (a little redheaded girl named Darlene) who sat next to me, and cleaned the eraser of her pencil on my pant leg. I didn't like Mrs. Elliot after that … didn't much like Darlene either.

What I did like about Mrs. Eliot was that she was always clear about what we needed to accomplish in class. She was serious about reading, writing, math and homework. She expected assignments to be complete, correct and neat. She also taught me to like art. In Kindergarten and first grade I had to color real lightly; I would get marked down if I bore down on the crayons to make the different colors

bright. I thought it was prettier if I made the colors real deep and bold. So, I never did well in art until I got to Mrs. Elliot's class. She must have understood that creativity requires freedom of expression. Or, she simply liked bold colors.

I kind of sensed that Mrs. Elliot didn't care very much about us boys. She was certainly more concerned about teaching us reading, writing and math, than she did about making us feel good about ourselves. I think that schools do get more cognitively oriented about the middle of the third grade.

Fourth grade was an interesting experience. We were supposed to learn how to square dance. I got in trouble because I wouldn't dance with the girls. We had a woman principal. I thought she was a real prude because she didn't allow boys to wrestle, or roughhouse. But, I can't for the life of me remember who my teacher was that year. Perhaps I was preoccupied with other things.

My favorite elementary school teacher. Fifth and sixth grades were simply great. I had one of my favorite teachers for two years in a row, Mr. York. He was a young fellow. He must have been in his mid to late twenties, married with a family. He would get out wrestle with the kids. He was a big burly guy. He would actually let us boys' fight as long as we were evenly matched and things didn't get out of hand. If we were having a difficult time getting through a lesson or something, he would just stop the class, take everyone outside, and we would play basketball or perhaps softball. Everybody played and once we burned off some excess energy he would take us back to class and we would get, right back to work. Mr. York was a tremendous person. He lived not too far from us, so I had contact with him outside of school as well. He was one of the adults in my life who would say "whatever you do, don't go into education - there's no money in it." But I watched him for two years have the grandest time during the day. His love of teaching, and his way with children had a profound influence on me.

He filled a void for me because he was a strong male figure who was really into academics, athletics and music. He required students to get up in front of the class and sing a song every day. Mr. York was also big on public speaking. We had to prepare, and deliver a speech on something of interest, each week. In retrospect the activity was enriching. I don't recall Mr. York being all that strict about homework. His policy was: "Turn in homework, get extra credit. If you don't, you won't." How did he put it? "You have to score well on my tests". Bottom line is he caused me to want to do my best everyday.

Mr. York had this one hard fast rule. Students had to be quiet when he was out of class for any reason. We had stay in our chairs. If we got out of our chair or if we weren't quiet, he would give us a swat when he returned to class. My three buddies and I, we always got the swats. I couldn't figure out why because I was always quiet. He would come back and say, "Wright, Abbott and Webb get in front of the class and grab your ankles". After much ceremony he would give us a swat or two depending on his mood. The happier he was, the more swats he tended to administer. At the end of the year the person who received most swats won the paddle. He would conduct a formal presentation complete

with a nice speech and etc. I won the paddle at the end of both those years. That was a big deal.

Athletics and Engagement in School

Around this time, I developed a real interest in athletics. I remember winning the City Baseball Tournament in the fifth grade. In the final game we played this team from across town that always beat us. In fact, as long as I can remember our team had never won a baseball game against them. Well, we finally won. I scored the winning run in a most unusual way. The score was tied with two outs in the bottom of the seventh inning. I singled to right field, stole second base, and ran over the third baseman while he was trying to field the ball, and stole home, to win the game. So, I was a big hero in my school from then on and that kind of excited an interest in athletics for me.

The power of extra curricular activities . I grew up in a great community for athletics; it was a grand time for high school sports. Hobbs was at that time, a boomtown. New stores were opened, businesses sprang up almost over night, and money was seemingly no object. The community financed a state of the art athletic complex consisting of a gigantic football stadium, track, basketball arena baseball fields, tennis courts swimming pool and etc. At an early age, my friends and I would sneak in the stadium on a Friday night to see the football game. So, we grew up wanting to be a Hobbs Eagle. That was the big thing. I went to junior high at Houston Junior High in Hobbs. We were called the Houston Red Devils. But we looked forward to the day when we could be the Hobbs Eagles. Hobbs had a second junior high in town, the Heiser Hornets. We did not think mush of them - not much competition. But, we played in a league all around Southeastern New Mexico. I think there may have been eight or ten schools in the league. We dominated all of the schools in all sports save one. The one school that we couldn't beat in basketball was Monument Junior High. It was a very small school in a little Mormon community. Monument was about 18 miles southwest of Hobbs. All they had there was, a general store, service station, a monument representing the early pioneers who settled the area, and a school. Monument was a ranching community in the middle of a rich oil field. In fact, there was oil all over that place. We thought we were the big shots. Nobody could beat Hobbs. Anyway, Monument came to our Christmas tournament. I'll never forget going out on the floor. The Monument team was already on the floor warming up. They had knee & elbow pads on something we would never consider wearing. Tough guys simply did not wear such things. They had every thing including fancy warm ups and silky looking uniforms. We called them sissies and pretty boys. To make matters worse their coach was a woman. When they committed a foul, their coach would say, "Raise your hand sweetheart;" and they would raise their hand. We thought that was really hilarious, but they beat the crap out of us, which was doubly embarrassing. Junior high was fun and had a lot of influence on my life. That's also the time that they introduced us to, social development activities such as dancing with girls, which was not quite as boring as it had been. Some of the girls were even kind of pretty, smelled nice, but I still didn't have a lot of time for them.

Athletics and friendships. I went Hobbs High school. It was a state of the art facility in those days. Just to give an example, the auditorium itself cost over one million dollars. People would come from all over just to see that auditorium. The gymnasium was named after Coach Ralph Tasker. I was privileged to have played basketball for him. He retired a couple of years ago, after coaching for fifty years. The football stadium handled 15,000 to 20,000 people, bigger than most colleges.

When I started high school, It was the late 1950s and Brown *vs.* the Board of Education was just being enforced. I remember kids making comments like *they were not gonna go to school with those black kids,* but that was not what they called them. They used the "N" word and I'm sure they were hearing this from their parents. But anyway, there was some racial tension around that, but not from the students. It came from ex-students, red necks, older people who were trying to cause division and that sort of thing. I remember when there was a race riot in Hobbs. The police came out and passed out shotguns and said that anybody that was African American –although that's not what the officer in charge called them– found on the north side of town after sundown, *we're gonna shoot them.* My grandfather owned several businesses in town. One of them was near what was called the colored community where the racial trouble occurred. (He had an auto repair shop, a service station, neighborhood store, and some apartments, stuff like that in the area). The businesses took up several blocks along East Marland Avenue, and were heavily frequented by blacks and white alike. I liked to hang out there whenever I went to town. That's where I met several black kids who became good friends. We played together when we were young, and eventually got to play football and basketball together in high school. At any rate, I got to know several black families, each of whom were the salt of the earth. They taught their children to behave, work hard and to respect themselves and others. What I learned about them clashed with what many "white people" said they were like. They mistakenly called Blacks (stupid, lazy, dishonest, and that sort of thing).

My own grandmother really got after me for bringing a black friend home with me to play. She said, *"you can't do that anymore."* She didn't say it in front of my friend, but it still made me angry. I recall thinking, why are you prejudiced? What do you have to be prejudiced about? After all you are an Indian yourself. I was puzzled about her getting angry. I knew it wasn't because I had a black friend. She later told me that I could be friend's with him, but to be careful about what kind of position I put him in. Her point was that many people did not like white children playing with black children, therefore might try to harm him, me, both of us. Considering the tone of the time's back then she probably did the right thing, because we did live in two separate worlds. The black community had their own theatre, their own markets. They had everything in their own community, and we didn't see them unless they were in school.

We finally attended high school together and played sports together. Some of my teammates were obnoxious about my being friends with some of the blacks on the team. After the first altercation I had with a couple of loud mouths - they kept their snide comments to themselves. It's amazing how much more clearly they were able to think once they learned there was a price to pay for being crude. I think I

learned at least three important lessons from this experience: First ignorance begets intolerance, and bigotry. Two, knowing that understanding and appreciating racial/cultural differences is an enriching experience indeed. And three, loyalty to friends in the face of adversity is a good measure of ones character.

I think it was in my freshman year that I began to see how important school was. Every kid that I knew and hung out with was planning to go to college. However, we had three curriculum tracks in our high school; a vocational track, general education track, and a college prep track. Of course my friends and I thought that anybody worth their salt was in the college prep track.

The summer of my junior year I went to visit my dad (I always spent a couple of weeks with him each summer). This summer was different, because my father had remarried, and moved to Page AZ. He was an engineer on the Glen Canyon Dam project. Dad said he wanted me to stay with him and his new wife. I didn't think that was a very good idea because all of my friends were back in Hobbs. So, we struck a deal. This was about the last week in June, first week in July. He said, "You just stay here until school starts and if you're not happy, then you can go home". I said, that wouldn't work because football practice starts the week before school starts.

He said, "We'll find out what time they start practice in both places". Well, luckily practice started in Page a week earlier than they did in Hobbs. Dad said, "You start here and if you're not happy at the end of the first week of practice then I'll fly you home". I thought fine, I can do that. By the end of the summer, I had met new friends. The school board hired Jack Davis to coach the team. He played for the Washington Redskins for a couple of years. He was an all American type guy. There must been a good deal of recruiting going on because we had athletes from all over the country. I mean kids from New York, kids from California, kids from Ohio. I did not want to admit it at the time, but I was really impressed. I told Coach Davis that I was thinking about going back to Hobbs to finish my senior year. I started there as tailback and defensive corner back my junior year and I told him "I'm going to go home to Hobbs because I have a better chance to get a good scholarship to a top school." He said, "Son, you don't need to worry about that. If you're good, as I think you are they'll find you". And then he said, "I guarantee you have a good year, I'll make sure they find you". What I didn't know in those days were your own coach had a lot to do with the recognition and exposure that you were going to get. And it's probably still that way today. If the coach thinks you can play at the next level then he will see that the right people hear about you. It doesn't make any difference where you are. It's how well you play.

We really had a good team. Seven of us played college football. I was fortunate enough to play on a national championship team in both football and baseball.

While in college, I was worked as a physical therapist (under the supervision of a physician). I worked with one fellow who was a top

officer in banking. He suffered from a crippling disease. His big goal in life was to able to walk back into his office. I worked with him for a couple of years about four times a week. I remember coming back from a ball game one weekend and went over to give him his therapy. He was dead. At that time, I was thinking about going to medical school. But this experience changed all that. I thought, "I can't do this." I felt like it was my fault. I felt abandoned. I felt deep sense of loss because a week before, I had this guy up and walking around. I mean, he was making progress and then simply died. I learned from this experience that what I wanted to do most in life was to teach and coach. So, I went into education.

First Job in Education

After I graduated I was given a graduate assistantship at ASU, and thought I had my career all planned out. Then this fellow called me from Northern Arizona he was the superintendent of the Apache County High School District. I thought I knew where he was located, having been in Page for that year. While it was a distant memory, I can still recall his area had good teams, good programs, and good communities. He said, "I have this job for you. You can teach whatever you want to teach. You can be the athletic director and football coach". Apache County High School, I thought, "Oh, I could do that". So, he said, "Why don't we meet Friday night. I'll buy you dinner and we can talk about a contract." So, I did.

He told me about this new school they were building. I was getting more excited about it all the time. It was just the ticket, new school, new program, new traditions, the whole package. I thought he was talking about St. John's or Round Valley; one of those two communities, hoping it would be Round Valley. He slipped me a contract across the table and I signed it. He said, "Don't you want to talk to your wife first?" I said, "No. No, she'll do this thing". Anyway, he said, "Well, okay". I pushed the contract back to him after I had signed it. I asked him, "Well, where will I be located, St. John's, or Round Valley? He said, "You won't be in either place. You'll be at the new school in Sanders". "Sanders?" I had no idea where in the world Sanders was. However, I had a friend in college that went to Sanders High School. He lived in Chambers, Arizona, but attended school in Sanders, so I thought I know a little bit about it. I was thinking now there must be two schools in Sanders. That's how foolish I was. So, my first job in education was in Sanders, Arizona.

I went home and my wife asked, "How did it go?" I said, "Well, I signed a contract to coach and teach in Sanders AZ". She said, "Oh, okay, good." "But do you know where Sanders is?" And I said, "Sure, Joe Chavez went to school in Sanders". She asked, "Do you think there are two schools there?" My wife is a very kind person. And I said, "Sure, there must be because the superintendent said it's a new high school. My wife said, "Well, maybe you better go check it out". I said "Sure. I will drive up there tomorrow". I asked her if she wanted to go. She said, "No. I've been there". So anyway, I drove up there. It took me five and a half hours from Scottsdale. Now this is important: We owned a nice, four bedroom home in Scottsdale. We had horse privileges. We had citrus. I mean we had a really nice place. We were actually set I had a graduate assistantship at ASU. So, I'm driving, probably five and a half, maybe six hours later, and I see

this station setting beside the freeway, a Whiting Brothers station. I pull in and ask the guy, "Where's Sanders?" And he says, "You're standing right in the middle of it". I thought, "Oh, my God". Then, I asked, "Where's the school?" He said, "Well, it's back there on top of the hill". So I drove around and looked at the school and my heart just fell because it was small and must have had maybe three hundred kids. I don't know. But, my heart just fell. I thought, "Oh, my Lord, what have I done?" So, I drove back home and I'm trying to figure out what I'm going to tell my wife. When I arrived home we discussed the job at some length. She finally asked, "What do you think you're going to do?" I said, "Well, I signed a contract". Then she told me about this great job offer. She said, ASU called. They have another job for you and want you to call them back". So, I picked up the phone and I called back. ASU offered me a job as Director of Placement at. I said, " I can't do that. I signed a contract". And the guy paused and he said, "Well, this is June. You can get out of those things. All you have to do is just tell them you're not coming. Just resign". I said, "Well, no, I signed a contract". He said, "Let me tell you, this is a one time chance. It's a big chance and there are not many opportunities like this that come along and it would be in your best interest to take this. Why don't you just write the superintendent? He will understand". I thought about it for about maybe one second. I said, "No. I gave the man my word. I'm going to fulfill that contract and if you guys have an opening or you want me to work for you after that year, then fine. But, I'm going to go do what I said I would do". You know, I had been asked many times, since that time, if I thought that was a mistake. Would I do that again? Absolutely. In a heartbeat, it was not a mistake. I'd do it again.

First Job as a Teacher and Head Coach

I had a great experience there. I'm not saying it was an easy experience necessarily, because it was a culture shock. But, it was a growing experience. The principal of the school was a new hire. Unfortunately we had the same last name. He was probably the best example of what you don't ever want to be as an educator. All the things you don't want to be, and everything that is bad about education, all the bad side of human nature, you could see reflected in that guy. Anyway, that's important for background because at this new school, we were supposed to be able to equip it to have state of the art facilities, because they had plenty of money. Well, he wouldn't spend any money. In fact, when it came time for football practice to start, I went down to the old school to pick up the equipment. It had been sold to the elementary school district.

I was young and foolish, I didn't know any better. I just went in and asked the secretary for the keys to the equipment room. And this guy came down. He called himself Mr. Roberts, bald head, had a thousand keys on his belt, and he really wanted to impress me. When he walked through the door he said, "Do you know who I am?" I mean that was his introduction "Do you know who I am?" I said, "I haven't got the slightest idea who you are. I'm new here myself". So, I introduced myself and he said, "Well, I'm the head teacher here. I'm Mr. Roberts, the head teacher here and I own that equipment there". I said, "Oh, the hell you say," because he was not very nice. He said, "Yes. When the district sold this building to my district the equipment went with it. I asked him, "Do you have a football team?"

He said, "No, we don't". I said, "Then you have no use for this equipment. I'm taking it". He was quite aggravated about that, said he was going to go call my boss and cause all kinds of problems. I told him it was probably better for his health that he just got out of there and did what he had to do, but I was taking this equipment.

The first day at football practice I was expecting a lot of kids to show up. That had always had been my experience. In high school there had always been fifty to sixty people there, a big turn out. Players had to compete to make the team. Naturally, I just expected it was going to be that way there. Why, I thought that with three hundred kids, there would be lots of kids wanting to try out? To make a long story short, I think eight or nine kids showed up the first day. I thought, "What the heck". Let me put this in perspective. Sanders had never had a winning season. In fact, winning a game was a winning season for them. So, I asked Sam, "Sam, where is everybody?" He said, "Coach, they can't come". "What do you mean they can't come?" He said, "Oh, they live all over the place". So, not being real bright and not knowing protocol, I just went down to the Transportation Department and got this little yellow van and checked the thing out. Well, I didn't check it out. I told the guy down there, "Look, I need a van. I'm going to go pick up some kids". He said, "Well, take that yellow one over there". Sam and Freddy Footracer were the guys that were with us. And we drove all over that attendance zone. We went and picked kids up and brought them in and got them registered for school. So, for the next four days before school started, we housed the kids in the gymnasium and my wife prepared the meals at home. I would take the kids over to my house and feed all those kids three times a day and we would come to the gymnasium. And then when school started, a couple of more kids came. So, we probably had more kids out there than they had in five of those schools up there. In fact, after the first ball game, we found out that my right tackle was twenty-seven years old. This is no joke. He was twenty-seven years old. He didn't look eighteen. He was a big guy. So, I made him the manager straight away when I found out how old he was. I asked him, "How come you haven't graduated from school?" He said, "Well, I only have one class left". And this is what was laughable, the guy was as old as I was and he failed American History four times. Can you imagine that? So, he couldn't graduate. So, I said, "Keith", his name was Keith Hardy, I said, "Keith, I'll tell you what. You're too old to be in school but you can be my manager and you register for this class and you will do an independent study for American History". So, my job then for the next semester was to make sure he passed. I remember going to town a couple of times on Monday morning to bail him out of jail because he would go to a dance and get drunk. After getting arrested you're allowed to make one call and I was the only person he knew. So I'd go bail Keith Hardy out of jail.

We lost the first three football games and won the next seven. It took that long to get the systems in place, get people acclimated and comfortable. It was unfortunate, because in those days only the top team of each division to go to the playoffs. One of those games we lost was the last place team. Can you imagine that? We beat one team 82 to nothing, another 62 to nothing. I'll never forget it and another 73 to nothing. But the last placed team had beaten us 6 to nothing. It was my fault. It was my fault because I didn't get the team prepared. They were even sorrier than we were and I just thought we

played two really tough games prior to that, Round Valley being one of those. We also lost to McKinley 7 to nothing. We had a real close ball game. And then, the next week we beat Page 19 to 0. They were the number one team in the state. I mean we were on a roll. But anyway, we lost that one game.

Lessons learned, battles won and lost. I learned from that one loss that kids will do about what you expect them to do. What you tell them, they're going to do. I'll never forget at halftime telling these kids who'd had a couple touchdowns called back. They were playing real sloppy. And I just said, "You girls don't want to win this game. You're going to lose it". Then I walked out. That was my big motivation speech. I thought, "Well, they're going to come out here all fired up". As soon as they came out of that locker room, I looked over at the guy who was coaching the line, Barry Webb. I said, "Barry, I made the biggest mistake of my life. They are going to lose". So, I learned a lesson from that. That was a good learning experience. But, we had a great football season and I think we had a good basketball season too. I coached the J.V. team. We were 16 and 4, might have been better. We actually beat the varsity twice in open scrimmages at night where the public community could come. And it wasn't because I was a good basketball coach, it's because the other guy was so bad. We played this, slow down ball where you never get to shoot the ball and I came from Hobbs, New Mexico where you're running and pressing all the time. We had better athletes.

Around this time, I also worked with one of the people kind of influential in my approach to coaching, Joe Dias. He is a counselor over at Mountain View High School now. He is one of the most professional people that I have ever come into contact with. And his model was Mr. Dubski, his high school principal in Superior. At work, Joe came to class everyday with a tie and a sports jacket. He was nothing but the most professional and he was the only other person on that campus. We both started our first job together, and both dressed that way. I was comfortable dressing that way, so it was kind of a nice, you know, a support group for the two of us. We hung together. He was the baseball coach. I helped him. He helped me. And we fought battles. I remember sitting in the principal's office one day and getting ready to play a tournament in Flagstaff and the principal wouldn't give us any money. It was really bad because we needed the money for the kids. So I just sat there until he finally said, "You're not going to leave are you?" I said, "Oh, I'm going to leave, but I'm going to leave with my check. That's one thing that is going to happen". He said, "I'm not going to give it to you". I said, "Oh, you are, because if you don't…" He said, "What are going to do if I don't?" I said, "I'm going to beat the hell out of you. There's no one here. You're not real bright. It's five o'clock in the afternoon; everybody's gone but you and me. It's just as simple as that. I either get my check or I beat the hell out of you". He gave me the check.

We had other differences too. Toward the end of the year the teachers were picking the McCaroll Award and that went to the top students in the whole community. I mean this is a big thing for Sanders, the McCaroll Award. In fact, when you drive through Sanders, before you get there, you will see an over pass that says McCaroll Road. I don't know what else is out there, but evidently it must be a

family name, probably an old ranching name. So, the principal calls a faculty meeting and he explained to all of us how important this award was. The best student in the school was a Navajo student but the principal went on for about ten minutes to explain how important this award was. It was pretty clear to me that there was a school board member who owned the restaurant and the motel. His daughter was graduating and she was going to go to BYU; it was real clear to me that the principal wanted her to have that award. She was maybe down the list as third or fourth student. So anyway, then Jerry, the principal, made a fatal mistake. He said, "You know, I know there's a lot of sympathy for some of these Indian kids. But, they're just going to be sitting their butts on a blanket out here and there's no sense in wasting the award." So being the timid person, I said, "Well, Jerry, since you just made the decision, why don't we just name the award after you and you just give it to whoever you want". And he said, "Oh, no. This is a faculty vote". And I said, "If it's a faculty vote, why don't you just leave it alone and let the faculty decide". He said, "Well, because I'm the principal of the school". I said, "That's not the point. You just told us it was a faculty award. The faculty is going to vote and we don't want you in here. You need to leave". Well, I had him intimidated at that point, so he just left. I talked to the rest of my colleagues and Joe was right with me on it. I said, "Look, this is really unfair. Now, we don't want to put you guys in a bad position because some of you are going to stay here. Some of you have been here in this community for a long time. The point is it is dead wrong. It's real clear who the number one student is and that's the person I'm giving the award". Well, that's the kid who got the award as it turned out. I think one of the lessons I learned from that was you need to stand up for what's right, but you need to be, maybe, a little more courteous. You don't have to resort to physical violence to get your way all the time. That was a great experience. In fact, people asked me over the years, "How long were you in Sanders"? I said I got ten years of experience in nine months. That's the way I looked at it.

Reflections on experience. In terms of everything except dealing with the kids and dealing with some of the faculty members going to Sanders was a mistake from the get go. As an example, we were promised low cost housing. The school district was to pay the fuel and I think we paid $50.00 or $60.00 a month for this new trailer homes. I detest trailers, but I was willing to pay to do that for a year or two. When we got there, they didn't have the park done. We all had to live down in a place called Cedar Ridge. They had water that looked like oil. You had to pay your own space rent, the rent on your trailer and your fuel bill was something like a $150.00 a month in the wintertime. In fact, that was one of the worst winters in 1967, one of the worst winters in the history of Northern Arizona. The freeways were closed down for three days. You couldn't go in either direction. Snow was near waist deep in places. This whole state came to a standstill, yet we were down there. It took us five days, Joe and I, to get our families down to Phoenix for the winter break. When we got back, the water lines had busted on the trailer and we had ice three inches thick on our living room floor and the fuel had run out. It was miserable, putting the babies to bed and hearing my wife crying. We were chipping the ice off of the floor to put the babies to bed. It was miserable, particularly when you think we had this nice home in Scottsdale that was warm. So, it was a good lesson for me. You better know more about

the community before you move in there. But, I wouldn't trade that experience.

Second teaching and coaching experience . I went from there to Apache Junction as a football coach and Athletic Director for a year, and then went to Phoenix Union School District after that. I completed my student teaching at Phoenix Union. There was a great lesson on how not to be a mentor. My mentor met me at the front door and said, "Here are the keys. I'll see you in six weeks if you're still alive". Two years later, he was a colleague and I was coaching with him and teaching right next door to him. I'm at Phoenix Union and it was really a very volatile time.

I loved the kids. I thought they were great and a lot of the teachers were really dedicated and well meaning. I thought the administration was spineless. I thought that it had some extremely hateful teachers there and some hateful coaches too. They were prejudiced. They were red-necked and they were hateful. One example relates to Phoenix Union and the old Montgomery Stadium; that's where coaches had their offices. I actually taught on the third floor of the Montgomery Stadium, which is the old Phoenix Tech Nursing School, was located. And I had a big office downstairs with a big counter way out front. And the kids would come and ask questions. It was a big school. Little kids tended to get lost.

One day, a kid asked one of the coaches a question and the student got a little bit flipped because the coach was a little bit rude to him. He was a black kid and so he said something back and the coach pulled him across the counter. So, I went out and got them apart and got the kid out to his class. But the coach went on about, "you're a bleeding heart liberal and you got to be tough around here with these kids". So I said, "You know what, Coach, I've noticed it. You kind of really jump in the face of those kids that weigh 105 pounds. I haven't seen you jump on a 6 foot, 250 pound kids". So anyway, our relationship went downhill after that.

I was offered, actually recruited, to go to Juanita High School in Southern California. The reason I was recruited there was because my old high school coach was the head football coach there, the one from Page. Can you believe that? And so, I went over and I coached the offensive and defensive backs and did the offense. And we won the 5A League in Southern California. And it wasn't because we were good coaches necessarily. We didn't have anybody in our back row who couldn't break 9 .9 seconds. The athletes were really really quick and big. In fact, we beat Santa Barbara. We had a long legacy of wins.

I only stayed there a year because we were right down on the beach. We thought we wanted to go down there. Basically, we went because my son, my younger son, had an asthma condition. We thought the coast might be better for him. It wasn't any better. What was bad was all the things that I've seen at Phoenix Union, I was seeing them to begin to surface over there. Only the worst things were happening. Dope, I think, was a problem. It was not a good situation. Then, the principal that hired me, left. That was a mistake because they replaced him with a person that was not a very good character; at least

I didn't think so. So, we decided, all things considered, we'll just come back. So, we sold our home in California and came back to Arizona.

Administration and Commitment to Core Values

I went back to Apache Junction, as the football coach and principal and did that job for two and a half years. Then I worked as a superintendent and stayed as a superintendent for twenty years. I remember the first year. I was having a debate, in fact it got pretty intense, with a good colleague, the assistant principal and we worked together for the next twenty some years. And a counselor, that was back in the early '70's when they were talking about the need that every youngster is going to have to have a high school education. That was the big thing then. But, a lot of our kids weren't making it. I had just come from Sanders who had a lot of kids who weren't making it and Phoenix Union who had a ton of kids that weren't making it. Then, California, even in that school, a lot of kids weren't making it. I remember talking to him and saying, "This is not right. You can't force these kids into the kind of classes that you think they need to have. We have to find a way for kids to graduate. That was before special education laws too. So, we had a lot of kids, that while we didn't recognize special needs formerly, we knew that some kids just simply couldn't do the work. To me, it didn't seem fair that we had this college prep curriculum and a population that wasn't college prep. It was never fair that we automatically would eliminate maybe 50 to 60% of the population. They were not going to get the high school degree.

So, I remember thinking that I'm the guy that believes in self-help. Here I was the guy that believed that if you want something out of this life, you've got to work hard to get, because that's the way I grew up. Do what's right and be responsible for your own success. So now, I was arguing for is let's make it easier and I was being told. "You're trying to give things away". I did not want to give things away, rather wanted to come up with some kind of a program where every kid could at least get a high school diploma. We weren't very sophisticated in those days, but I felt I was talking something about important. I was talking about making adjustments for kids that can't adjust. So, out of that whole discussion came, I think, came a philosophy that said ***we're going work with every child***. In spite of the fact that almost everybody says they believe in it, almost nobody did anything about it.

So we created a system where we could have a plan for every kid. It might not be a formal one, but it basically said to find out where the kids are and take them from where they are to where they need to be, as far as we can get them. And let's don't say we're going to have an official cut off and some kids were going to get a degree and some kids are not. So, the rules were if you came to school everyday, you did your work and you tried, we are going to promise you that you're going to graduate. And out of that grew a home school visitor's program, a state of the art alternative school. We had people coming from all over the country. It got so popular that I wouldn't even meet with visitors anymore. I would meet with a group, but I'd have the whole staff there, 18 - 20 people that worked in the system with all

those different programs and have them explain what they were doing in those programs.

So, it was interesting to see the organization move from a system that was kind of a joke to a system that was recognized not just in this state, but the nation as well. Our program was perhaps one of the best around. We won lots of awards such as the Pinnacle Award, which is a National Award. Our programs were replicated around the country. And because of that, I was recognized Educator of the Year, Superintendent of the Year runner up, and then Superintendent of the Year on another occasion and then Distinguished Superintendent. I won a State Leadership Award from the State American Legion, and recognition from Washington, D.C. for programs for disadvantaged kids.

Family support. The other thing was I had was a supportive family. So, I was put in a position where I could develop those skills. That was important. I think what I learned was that it didn't matter who you are or what you achieve; you get there because somebody has helped you do it. I think I began to realize that. Learning was easy for me and I was a gifted athlete. All those things came about because somebody gave me a break somewhere along the way. Even though, at the time, I thought it was earned. So, the philosophy that I developed was: why don't we take a look the roadblocks that might be out there from all different points of view. Huddle to attend to those obstacles. Try to get those identified and find ways around them because, you know, you can't remove them all. But you have to try to find ways around them.

I think what's managed my decision making process and made my administrative approaches is I don't like saying no. Although, I will say no, I like to find and explore all other alternatives before saying no because no is easy. No is clear and no is easy. It's sometimes harder to explore creative alternative solutions. But, my rule is this. I set an ethic rule, one is whatever you do, it has be ethical. It has to be legal. It has to be moral. And if those pieces are in place then we'll try to find the resources you need. We'll try to find the extra resources to get it done. But, we are going to try our best to give you what you need.

Let me give you an example. I had a kid. He was one of those kids that were a great athlete as a freshman. He was a big kid, smart, good-looking kid. And he came back as a sophomore and I don't know what happened to him. He was into drugs that I know of at the time. He was just a hellion. He wouldn't attend class. He was always in trouble. He was out with the assistant principal one day and I saw him at lunch. He just came back from being off campus. It was closed campus. I saw him and stopped him and was talking to him. I said, "You know, you can't be doing this". "I can do a damn thing I want to do". I said, "Listen friend. You might be able to do that, but you can't do that here". "Who the hell are you?" "In fact, why don't you just leave? We don't want you here because, you know what, you're just going to be a damn dishwasher the rest of your life. That's all you're going be if you're not in jail. Just get the hell out of here. We don't want you here". The kid turned around and walked off. This is a sophomore, a young kid, but his mom and dad had given up on him. Everybody had given up on him. He just came to school. So, I saw him about, I guess, two years later. I was driving and he was he trying to

get my attention, whistling. So, I looked over and there was this kid. And I said, "How are you doing?" I called him by name. I said, "How are you doing?" He said, "Oh, not too good". He was on the passenger's side and he pointed down at the door and he was riding in a prison vehicle.

Commitment to core values. And I thought at the time, wait a minute, here's another thing that tied back to my experience in Sanders when I told those kids that, "You're just a bunch of girls. You're gonna lose this ball game". I had told that kid, "You're gonna be a loser. You're gonna be a dishwasher and end up in jail", and that's what happened. I thought, wait a minute, that may have happened, whether or not I made that comment, but the point that I learned was that it isn't my job to be the judge. My job is to be the advocate. And you're going to get a whole lot further along with helping the other person if you try to take the advocate stance. If you're an adversary, who I had been, kids will fight you. But, if you're an advocate, they can't fight you. So, I think I came around. I'm not going to give up on kids or adults either. They can give up on me if they want to, but I'm going to keep trying. What I got from that realization, what we need is, on campus suspension. As simple as that sounds, that was kind of a unique idea back in those days and a true alternative to expelling kids from school. By that I mean an alternative school is not just a place where *bad* kids are. It's a place where kids can go to, that school starts about two thirty in the afternoon and runs until eight or nine at night. School is a setting where kids can go but the rules are not as strict as they are during the day. You can take one class or you can take a whole bunch of classes. You can actually graduate from there; it gives an opportunity to a kid like this, to work with him, and get him into counseling if he needs it. It is a way to get him into a different educational setting. Maybe he could have handled an evening setting. He couldn't handle the regular day. And years later, what comes out of this was the National School Board Association's Pinnacle award for best programs in America. Actually, the valedictorian came from the alternative school. So, that's a specific and there are probably a hundred like that.

It starts with baby steps, you know, real small steps. In fact, this is as far as you can see so this is as far as you go. I knew we needed something, but didn't know what it was. So, I looked at the entire alternative programs around the region, looked in the Southwest and there was nothing that was an alternative school, or my concept. There were alternative schools out there but they were punitive in nature. So, I found a Catholic Priest that was also a teacher and hired him to run this alternative school. He was a retired principal from a parochial school. He was still a visiting Priest, I guess, at different parishes. So, I hired him to set up the school, went over to the County and looked around to see if there were some monies or something available. There wasn't. Over at the Correction Department they had some relocated buildings; some doublewides they found out could be refurbished and turned out to be pretty nice classrooms. We got those for nothing. Just for the price of rooting them up and finding a place to put them on campus. So, we started out that way and then he filled them with just regular books and supplies and materials. And then from that level, we saw that was actually working, there was a financial benefit to that as well. What we did was the first semester, picked up another $100,000 in ADM that we hadn't had the year before.

So, we were able to use those monies and begin to buy specialized pieces of curriculum, that sort of thing. Then we started looking at an alternative parallel curriculum. We hooked up with technology as it came along, bought into the Nova Net, which is a pretty good computer learning computer program. Then we hooked up with Maricopa County and a state agency on career exploration, where kids could actually go to the computer. If they wanted to be a firefighter, they could find out what the job potential was in the field, what the training might be needed and that sort of thing. We plugged that in and the whole idea was to create a place where all kids can come. So, out of that grew a career center, an independent learning center, electronic and computerized learning programs, with kids coming there for part of the day and back into the mainstream the rest of the day.

Then we brought in school psychologists. In fact, it grew to the point where our group became one of the approved sites that the state University's would use as internships for school psychologists. So, we had the benefit of having three or four interns doing some of the school psychology work. Then we went to mental health counselors and other kinds of advocates. All that grew out of that project. So, every year we'd look at what we'd done. For the evaluation, we looked at where the gaps were and what resources we might have to accommodate the special needs of kids.

From a leadership prospective, what we learned from the experience was that you have to continually remind people what the mission is or vision is as in this case. As we came upon the concept that an alternative to traditional education was going to work, we really had to put ourselves in the best position personally to succeed intellectually, academically, emotionally and physically. We had to keep ourselves in good condition and continue to learn, that sort of thing. And the same thing applied to everybody else, especially the kids. By teaching principles such as people are more important than things, it reminded people that what our mission was – ***kids come first here***. No matter what anyone said or did, kids would come first. We continually reminded people of that and every decision was made through that value. You begin then to collect people advocates around who believe the same and will work in the same direction. I think that was a real; it's kind of an evolution. And a lot of it came from that one event with that one kid. There were other things that happened that same year, similar in nature, and then in subsequent years.

It seemed like every year or so there was some incident that would occur, some circumstance, which would get us to think again or rethink what we're doing. In fact, what come out of the experiences, the idea of putting people in the best position in all those dimensions, was exactly what we had talked about when Career Ladder program came along. It was easy for us to jump on that because we had already had a system of evaluation/accountability in place. We were one of the first ones approved (by the state) because we were already doing it. It was just a simple matter of tweaking it a little bit and then turning plans in to the state. You know, in those early years, there was a ton of money and so we were able to raise teacher's salaries in the first year. Some of the teachers got $15,000 to $16,000 raises. They came in one year making $15,000, the next year they're making $30,000. Well, you can make progress real quick. Those kinds of things, I think, helped turn the district around and reinforce

the philosophy that you really can be in control. I mean, no matter how short or limited resources are, no matter how large the problems are, if you'll grapple with those problems, try to understand them and then establish a plan to overcome the obstacles, you can do good work. Simple as that, but you have to be serious about one thing. Kids come to us from all different levels of understanding and from all different talent levels and from all circumstances. It is not our job to judge their work. Our job is say that all kids have potential, all kids are worthy and they are worthy of our respect and their worthy of our help. And if we're not willing to do that, then we don't belong here. I fired principals, hired them in August and fired them October. I fired teachers first day on the job, training sessions. I fired bus drivers. I have fired my best friends because they would violate that principle. **Kids come first.** You can't do anything illegal, unethical or immoral to do the job here. So, the message gets around pretty quick that the boss is serious about protecting these kids.

When I started this mission in the early days, I had a pretty clear idea of the way things ought to be done. In fact, I even recall saying, there's just a certain way to do things. I even used an analogy one time; it's just like when you take a shower. You get out of the shower and the first thing you do is clean your fingernails. My wife pointed out this is not the first thing that everyone does when they get out of the shower. She reminded me that was the first thing that I did. So, there's not a certain way to do things. There are a lot of good ways to do things. Pick one of those that work.

What is not negotiable, what's not negotiable in the end, is that once we agreed on what the goal is, the goal is no longer negotiable. Now we've got to do that. I think that may be the genesis of a lot of failure in schools and other organizations. If we have a strategic plan and we have some goals here that the strategic plan will help us to achieve those goals. If one person didn't think those goals through very clearly or didn't plan well or we started working on those goals and found we had some competing goals going on that were also really important. So, we shifted our attention to the competing goals because they are important and there were some people clamoring to get those things done. Well, we have to come to the realization that there are critical things that we must do. Let's do those better than anybody else. They are critical functions in the school that educators can do better than anyone else. Let's focus on those and if other important things surface, you try to pick off one or two at a time and handle them, then great. If you can't, forget about them. Stay focused on what's critical, because in the end you'll win the game. In the end, if you continue to pay attention to what's most important and protect those, what some people call them core values. And for me, if we can turn out kids who are reasonably well adjusted, who have some life long learning skills in place and have, to some degree, a love of learning and are willing to take the risks, the calculated risks, I think you turned out a pretty good human being.

<u>On leadership</u>. I have been asked over the years to define what the role of superintendent was and it's pretty simple. Some days it's nothing more than keeping everybody off of everybody's backs so teachers could teach the kids, simple as that. You're a facilitator. In fact, long before they termed the phrase, the *Servant Leader*. That's what I think leadership is. The best leaders are servants.

They are servants of a cause and they're servants of the people. That doesn't mean that you take a second role. What it means is we work harder than anybody else. Another way to put it, I'm the worker bee. If you're a classroom teacher working with a kid, find out what the kid needs and meet it. If you're working with adults, find that need. Meet it.

My experiences have been, hard work is energizing. That sounds kind of strange, but there is a limit to what you can handle. It's just like running sprints to get ready for a football practice. You can over do that. So, what you have to find is what's your balance and keep that balance. What I discovered, and you can't tell by looking at me know, I'm working on it, but I always found time to work out. In fact, in the old days I would run 6 or 8 miles a day and I worked 14 hours a day. But, I take part of that time I'm working, I'd go run that six miles. I put in a 14-hour day, but part of it I reserved for myself and I was still able to play racquetball, play a little one on one basketball, something to keep moving. I did that the majority of the time that I was there, all the time when I was a teacher and a coach, the majority of the time as a superintendent. The times that I didn't were the times that I struggled. A year or two when I wouldn't, I thought I got too busy and I just don't have time to go run. But I learned from that. You have to keep yourself in good physical condition before you can meet the challenges of the day and that's important.

The other part is continuing to learn. One of the things I think that served me well is I'm an avid reader and I think before we make a large mistake sometimes, we don't continue to read the good works that we are exposed to in the schools. In the old master's you learn all kinds of important information. It helps you to better understand yourself. Remember what Solomon said? "In all that giving, give understanding". So as you're out there trying to make your way through the world and to get better and to make it, seek to understand as you go along and in order to understand I think you have to read the classics. I think you have to listen to good music. I think we have to stay away from some of the popular stuff. But, you don't spend all your time going to movies and all your time in front of the television set.

Work ethic. I also learned that my efforts start from a basic commitment to family. When I was growing up, I saw a lot of people around me that were building great businesses, great grocery stores, great practices. Whatever your business is, you ought to use that business to build a great family. Not the other way around. What you can do is talk to people about where you are and where you want to go and what possibilities, how can we get there. Then, what can I do? What can you do? What can we do? So a part of this isn't unfolding, it's an evolution. How do we make things better? It begins with some basic principles. In the end when it comes down to, when you peel everything else away, what's important is I if I take that road, how does that work with the people affected? When you talk about programs and how programs are built and how they evolve, people are programs. You can have the best program on paper in the world, but if you don't have the right kind of people running that program, it will die. And the other part is how do you ever build a program? The people build it. They're going to do that to the extent that they're in contact

with a real clear vision and they have a sound mission. That we all conceived goals laid out and they have the dedication and willingness, courage to fulfill those goals. The job as a leader is trying to surround you with people like that and encourage them to continue to move.

People follow vision and I know that it was that way for me. I played for some great coaches and that's what I want to be a part of. At the time that I was playing for them, I thought they were okay. I didn't realize they were great men. They were great men because of that vision, they're going to keep their vision, and they were willing to share that vision. I think that's where it comes from. I talked about people that we hired and fired. People can look good on paper and then say all the right things in an interview, but when the whistle blows are you ready to go to work? That's the point. If you're not willing to do what you say, then you don't need to be around here. So, you surround yourself with people that will seek their own level of involvement and you want that to be a very high level of commitment. And there were some people that, you know, you almost have to hold them back a little once they get to driving toward a point and remind them that there are other things that are important. Your own family is important to you, rest of life is important to you because they'll get so zealous in pursuing a mission that they'll forget other things along the way. Part of your job, if you really want to do your job correctly, is that you got to keep people healthy and well and whole so they can be of service to their colleagues and their kids. I think everybody wants to work hard. I've always thought that. I never met anybody who didn't want to work hard. What they want is to be appreciated and recognized.

Credit, blame, and power. I think another part of people of willingness to work hard is that I think people need recognition and credit. This is my belief. If you will recognize and give credit to everyone else, there will be plenty of it.. You don't have to ask for it. You get way more blame than you ought to get and way less credit than you ought to get. But, the truth is you can't have both credit and power. They are mutually exclusive. And if you want to be a power as a leader, then I think you have to empower others and you have to recognize them and give them credit. And the way that works is if people are pursuing a worthwhile mission and they're producing good results, they need to be given recognition and credit for it. They're happy and they don't want you to be gone. They want you to stay in that place so they can continue to do what they're doing. If you're ever in trouble, they're going to rally around you. Night follows day. If somebody attacks you, they're attacked in return. And it isn't necessarily by extension. They know that you're their anchor and you're the root cause or to a large degree, their success. They don't want you to move. They want you right there so they can continue to do what they're doing. So, that's what I define as power as being anchored in a position so that you can facilitate the work of others and you get the mission accomplished.

There are multiple themes about life and leadership that come from Bill's story – integrity, resiliency, fairness, inner strength, and boundary crossing. Bill's own summary concludes:

- *I believe in taking charge, and holding myself and others accountable for producing good results.*
- *I think you must have a clear vision of what you want to accomplish, you need to make sure people receive the training and support they need to succeed.*
- *You need to have a personal and professional growth plan in place to assure continued success.*
- *You need to align resources with your goals and objectives.*
- *You need to understand that the leader is keeper of the vision.*
- *You have to have the courage to make the difficult decisions.*
- *You have to protect the rights of all concerned.*
- You must try your best to put the people you lead in the best to position to succeed intellectually, physically, emotionally, and socially.

In the story, there is a manifest connection between how one behaves as a human being and how one conducts oneself as a leader. The leadership coaching points and underlying value messages to administrators are built on deeply held convictions on the importance of hard work, and achieving an integrated life that balances the personal and the professional.

Learning When to Say "The Emperor has no Clothes:" Parenting Stories as a Vehicle into Administration and Leadership

This final story provides background and experiences of the co-author of the paper; it focuses on his use of narrative as a way to make sense of his personal life and experience and his, learning through stories, to capture important aspects of experiences.

Growing Up

I was born in Perth Amboy, New Jersey. I'm the third son and the youngest of three boys. Growing up, my dad was the Executive Director of the "Y" in Perth Amboy and my mom was a housewife. She took care of the kids, was a substitute teacher once in while, and later became a junior high school English teacher in Brooklyn, New York.

Perth Amboy is a small town, probably thirty thousand people then, in the middle of Middlesex County, which is a big, industrial county known for lots of oil refineries. We lived in an older house on Water Street, which I remember had a big ivy yard, which was a ball trap. If you played ball and if it went into the ivy there was no finding it because the ivy was pretty thick. We lived in that house until I was probably in about fifth or sixth grade. Perth Amboy had a large harbor, off the Raritan River. I remember that there used to be a big July 4th celebration and a Navy Cruiser would dock and all the kids would climb up and down the ship's ladders.

I can remember some of my elementary school teachers. My kindergarten teacher was Ms. Walters, and was kind; my first grade teacher was Ms. Caston. I remember every once in a while my mother would substitute for the teacher and I would not know what to call her, Mrs. Mom, I think or…Mrs. Mommy. In third grade, I had the principal's cousin, Ms. Dalton and I remember her as being a terrific teacher. The fourth grade teacher recommended that I skip to sixth grade, where I had my first male teacher, Mr. Cochak. He was a brand new teacher and I remember that he wrote a letter telling my parents he expected great things from me one day.

I do remember being a pretty smart kid and in elementary school, skipping from fourth grade right to sixth grade. I had a September birthday, so after that, and all through school, I was always younger and less mature than my classmates. I was sixteen when I graduated high school and left home for college.

Growing up with high educational expectations. During elementary school, my dad went graduate school and completed a doctoral degree in sociology at New York University (NYU). It was the late 1950s I remember I must have been about eight or nine. He was writing his dissertation, a survey of community leaders which I still keep up in my office. And I remember the whole family sitting together to help with the arithmetic for all the tables of survey questions. I was good in arithmetic so I remember helping my dad with his research. At his graduation, they took a picture of me in his cap and gown, and always said that I wear my own some day.

We were religious family. Every Friday night, we had our Sabbath dinner and you were expected to be there, no matter what. Saturday morning, we got up and we all walked to synagogue. My dad until the day he died, never rode in a car on Friday night or Saturday day. He was born in Palestine and emigrated to the United States when he was about thirteen. His father was a Rabbi and my dad was focused, and personally, very structure man. He had stick-to-it-ness, the ability to sit for a long period of time, stay focused in order to get work done. He wasn't one of these ADD people who moved around a lot. He had grown up poor, was shaped by the Depression. He focused on his work, job, family, and religion. He was pretty much an absentee dad, you know. He wasn't a ball player. He was a family man but he wasn't the kind of father who played with the kids. He didn't see that as his role as was probably true with most fathers of the 1950s. He was a religious man and he prepared for the future.

In retrospect, I think my dad realized that being a director of a "Y" in a community that was kind of on decline was a tough job. The job at the "Y" grew more difficult and he lost support of the Board of Directors. I think that he had an unsuccessful fund raising campaign. When the Board realized that he had his doctorate and was going to leave anyway, instead of waiting until the end of the year, they told him to leave, and fired him in the middle of the year. So, we moved from New Jersey to Brooklyn where I went to junior high school. Brooklyn was a little bit more ferocious world to a mild-mannered kid from a small town. But, I still did well in school. I remember taking placement tests (probably and IQ test) to determine which 7th grade class i would get put in, and I was put in 7-3 or 3rd out of 30 possible 7th grade classes.

My dad took a job at Howard University in Washington, D.C. which was his first academic appointment, in the School of Social Work at Howard. I think he recognized that tenure probably wasn't likely, but it was a good position coming out of graduate school, being in his late 40s and making the transition to higher education. But, he didn't want to move the family, so we stayed in Brooklyn while he commuted to Washington, D.C. during the week and came home for the weekends. My mom started teaching full-time and my oldest brother went off to college. My middle brother and I were kind of left on our own a lot. After my sophomore year in high school (1962) my mother and father bought a house, and we moved to Long Island. That was the first house they'd ever owned; I was a junior in high school. My dad got a job as a professor at Kingsborough Community College, which was part of the City University of New York system. He could teach graduate courses if he wanted to, was director or research, had a little research thing and I was going to go to college.

I wasn't a very aggressive child and remember being humiliated as a kid, getting beaten up by my supposed friends. The hurt stayed with me a long time. In high school, one of my friend said he was tired of other kids kicking during gym class soccer, which was really "kick the other guy." So he asked me to watch his back when he was going to fight this other kid. And, so I said, "Okay." So one of the "toughs" who had been hammering on him hitting on him, kicked him, and he punched him and then this other kid, who was a real tough kid, jumped on my friend's back. So I had to jump on the this other kids back to make it a fair fight, or at least a one-against-one fight. I got knocked down pretty quick, but had done my job, And in the meantime, my friend had time to take care of his dispute. But, nobody picked on us in the locker room and that was kind it; and it kind felt good, that at least I knew that I could cover somebody's back if somebody asked. That was a milestone for me.

College Experience

I went to college in 1965, the University of Buffalo. The University had high-aspirations in those days, and wanted to be the *Berkeley of the East*. The campus was in transition, from a private university with dental and law schools, to a public institution, part of the State University of New York system. The University was developing plans for a new campus and the old campus was in transition. At orientation, every student was told to look around left, and right, in front, in back and recognize that by the end of

freshman year, 4/5 of you would all be gone, dropped or flunked out of college. And that's really what happened. I lived in this dormitory, which was about a mile from campus, and they stuck about five of us in a two-room apartment. Of the five of us, I was the only one who stayed around to graduate, and barely got through with my freshman and sophomore years.

I turned eighteen in September of my sophomore year in college and I got my driver's license. I bought a car from my aunt and uncle, got an apartment and did what all seventeen year olds with total freedom do … had fun and forgot about going to class. I think I got seven Fs and three Cs that year in school. And the Dean called me into his office and said, "Son, it doesn't seem like you really want to go to college." And I said, "Well, I don't know about that, Dean." And he said, "Well, son, why don't you try a few night classes?" In those days, they had a night classes with extended education. If you couldn't make it in day school, you could still go to school at night. The Dean offered to take all the courses from my sophomore year and change them to Ws (withdraws), but I had to take a semester off, and then return to night school for a semester, earn grades of B or better. I didn't know that my dad had called the dean advocated for such an offer.

So that year, I starting taking night classes and working at Bell's IGA for $1.25/hour an hour. I thought I did good work at the supermarket. I worked during the day and went to school at night. And, surprisingly, my bad grades turned into pretty good grades, even though I was working, supporting myself. All of a sudden, I wanted to do it. And I did pretty well from then on through. I even got on the dean's list and a year later, went back into the day program.

Campus radicalism and the Vietnam War. Campus radicalism was just beginning to enter the culture at the University of Buffalo in the late 1960s and 1970s. Demonstrations, sit-ins, teach-ins, police on campus, tear gas, and all that came with it became the norm for campus life. Maybe that was why I majored in political science. What I read in the Buffalo newspapers every day was not what I saw happening on campus. Reported student riots were more like police outbursts. Broken windows and building takeovers were part of demands for accountability for the University's connections to the military and government. My early thoughts of being a physician seemed irrelevant. There was a war going on and life would never be the same.

I was a participant. This was my first exposure to reading the headlines in the newspapers and seeing the gap between what you saw happened and what was recorded in the paper. Most of the time, we were bunches of kids who were young and, wanted to play Frisbee on the Commons. Then the police would order us off the grass, push us to the side, or order tear gas. The following day, the local newspaper would report that the students had rioted. But, I do remember taking the arms of other students and barricading the President's office, and keeping him out the President and Vice-President. And the administrator's just looked at us with kind of a weary look in his eye, but didn't cross our lines.

I think, in retrospect, we were all as much nervous about our own futures, as we were trying to make a statement about the War. There were also some very committed people. I had a friend who's a lawyer now, who ran a little press, an underground newspaper; he was a dedicated believer in social justice. I remember the police coming and just trashing the offices, breaking the machines and all. And I remember thinking at that time that the world will never be normal again. They were pretty confusing times.

Entering teacher education. Perceived teacher shortages led the university to offer a year-long certification program for secondary teachers. So during my last year of school (5th year actually), I took education courses, which probably weren't as rigorous as the pre-med courses I started in my freshman year. I was doing pretty well in school, and completed my student-teaching. Teaching also offered a temporary draft deferment (2S), which I applied for and received. Part of my decision to become a teacher was to avoid getting drafted. In my second year of teaching, the government did away with teaching deferments and everyone got thrown into the draft lottery. My number was 151, and the number that year for the group of people who were drafted only went up to 150. I do remember going for a draft physical and having to decide what I was going do if they told me I had go. I was right on the cusp. I remember going to Quaker meetings to decide whether I wanted to be a conscientious objector. Some of my friends got braces put on their teeth because you couldn't get drafted if you had braces. Other people went into the Army Reserves. But, I kind of lucked out. My strategy was just to wait and see what would happen.

I remember having an argument with my dad, one of the few arguments about what I was going to do with my life. I remember my dad asking me, " What are you going to do with your life?" I was twenty-one and told him that I was going to get a job teaching. And he said, "Then you have to do that, if that's what you want to do."

I interviewed for a secondary education teaching job in Buffalo Public Schools and the hiring director said, "You know, you seem like a pretty soft-spoken guy. Are you sure you can handle high school kids?" I said, "sure" and I was hired a week later, to teach math and social studies at a large city high school. Kensington High School was not in the poorest part of the city, but not a suburban high school either. It served a working population of ½ white and ½ African American students. The school had opened in 1933, and about ½ of the faculty had been hired in the 1930s. I had long hair, and was not much older than some of my students (21 years old) and was mistaken for a student many times during that first year. I also remember some of the hostility that students sometimes feel when walking in the halls of large urban schools. In retrospect, I struggled with many of the things new teachers face, and began to learn how to teach. I taught five periods a day, ninth grade tenth grades, then tenth grade and eleventh grades. I taught both history and math classes. I'd taken calculus and other college math and I guess they figured that I could teach math too.

Teaching highs and lows. Kensington High School had an older faculty, many of the teachers had dedicated their lives to this school and I was just a young kid who had come in and his hair was down to his shoulders, in a pony tail. They didn't really like

me. The head of the Math Departments, who had been there since the school had opened, would come to my class and wait until I'd make a mistake and then stand up and say, "Mr. Danzig, you made a mistake." It was kind of humiliating! I was kind of taken under wing by a more experienced teacher whose room I shared during the mornings. He was a good teacher and I finally complained about it. He said I should talk to the head of the Teacher's Association. The representative for the Teachers Association told me to write down what I had to say, said he would talk to the math chair about it. He told me that he wouldn't file anything formally, but that it didn't sound like I was really happy being corrected in front of the rest of my class. And he suggested that " I might want to consider joining the teacher's association besides because, whether you join it or not, they are taking money out of your paycheck every week." So, I said, "Thanks." And he must have talked to her because she never came back into my class.

In the mornings I taught world culture and world history classes. In the afternoons, I taught algebra and geometry. In the afternoons, I taught in the portables because as a new teacher, you didn't get your own classroom. The portables were located away from the main building and a difficult place to teach. The students sat in the same classroom for three periods and the teachers would rotate in and out after every class. It prepared me for teaching graduate student cohorts, where the bond among students in stronger than bond with the professor.

I was one of those young, liberal teachers. The students liked me. I don't think I was particularly good, but I was nice to the students, at least most of them. I was less able to handle some of the difficult students, particularly some of the teenage girls in my afternoon Math classes. I removed two of them from one of the general math classes and the administration supported me; the girls were sent to a study hall instead but allowed to take the Regents' Exam. Having adolescent daughters, some 30 years later, tells me that no one is really very good with difficult adolescents and that the best you can do is keep them from hurting themselves or others. But I really didn't have any experience back then, either with math curriculum or with adolescent girls.

I had an apartment about five blocks from the school, so on some days I would walk home with the students, or they'd say, "Hey, Mr. D, you want a ride?" And I'd say, "No, thanks." And I'd see students in the Laundromat when I was washing my clothes. And the older ones would ask me if I wanted to go out for a drink and I would say no thanks. And for the most part, I seemed to get along with the students, though I'm not sure how much I taught them.

Student demonstrations at the high school. Conflict on the college campus filtered down to the high schools. One day, the students decided to have a sit-in demonstration about the War and about other grievances at school. As the local newspaper got wind of the demonstration, reporters and photographers were on campus looking for the story and for people to explain what was going on in the school. I had experience being in demonstrations and knew that people got hurt from pushing and crushing each other. Pretty soon the high school students starting pushing and shoving to see what was going on and I knew somebody was going to get hurt. And while other

teachers were yelling at the students to get up, trying to get them to go back to their classes, I was telling everyone to sit down, relax, and listen to the speeches that were coming. It's safer if you're sitting down than standing up, because you take up more room, and it prevents that crush of people. And I remember going up to a photographer and telling him that he had to leave. He argued that the Principal said he could come in and take picture but I told him that he had to leave, that he was creating a danger to the people in the building. And then I was telling kids to sit down and relax while we set up PA system so everyone could hear. So I was telling kids to sit down, while other teachers were yelling at kids to go back to their classrooms, and there was chaos all around.

In the end the kids talked, they got a chance to speak their grievances, make written lists to present to administration, and to some degree, learn to communicate how they felt about their world. Maybe it was just missing classes for some, but for others, it was the beginning of awakening, as it had been for me. And for at least part of a day, students got a chance to talk, to each other, to teachers, to administrators. And, no one got injured or hurt. As a teacher, I felt that I was a safety valve and that my classes allowed at least some of the students to blow off steam.

Graduate School and Entry to Professional Life

After two years, I felt a need for something different. The school environment raised lots of new questions and ultimately felt too confining. So I applied for graduate school and was accepted by the Social Foundations department at the University of Maryland. Maryland is kind of an older pretty campus, with large southern style buildings. I studied with a wonderful professor, Dan Huden, who was one of those gentle professors, a kindly, and thoughtful man. He also was incredibly well read, on many, many subjects related to education. He just worked hard, worked on behalf of students, and helped people. I spent almost three years, visiting with him once a week, reading books together. I'd give him my slant on it and he'd give me his slant on it. We would pick different books and I'd keep a journal about the books and readings. That experience taught me a lot about scholarship and dialogue. I took courses in history, philosophy, and sociology of education, research, and educational administration. I also had a teaching assistantship and taught undergraduate classes in social foundations.

Three years later, I had completed all of the coursework for my doctorate and I wasn't ready to write a dissertation. The University of Maryland had an extensive undergraduate college program on Army Posts and Air Force Bases in Europe and Asia. So I decided that I would go to Europe and teach in the program. My department also had an emphasis in comparative and international education and deemed travel and important growth experience. One of my professors had taught overseas during his sabbatical and talked positively about the experience. So I rationalized that going abroad would be sort of an internship that would help me with my dissertation. But mostly, I was tired of courses and didn't see a direction for writing a dissertation.

I traveled all over Europe — England, Scotland, Ireland, Scandinavia, France, Germany, Austria, Italy, Greece, Czechoslovakia, Russia, Greece, Crete and other places.

I lived and taught in England (Cambridge) for about eighteen months and then Germany (near Heidelberg) for another two years. It was sometimes strange being a Jew in Germany, trying to imagine what it had been like to live during the Nazi era. I visited a concentration camp near Munich, and tried to feel what it was like to be there. But it was more like going to see a movie, with the screen in your head. I tried to hear the screams, but all I heard was silence, screams of silence.

The work was great. I taught multiple courses in the Foundations area and learned the course material, probably a lot better than I had as a graduate student. The students were mostly soldiers or their dependents, working on undergraduate degrees, that used education classes as electives or towards some future certification. They were older students, hard working, and tremendously interested in the material, and motivating for the teacher. I usually spent the day preparing and then taught three-hour classes (4-7 PM), four days a week, and had the rest of the time to travel, etc. After being asked to supervise a student teacher for the main campus, I even developed a kind of alternative certification program for high school teachers. I organized and supervised the first class of student-teachers in Europe for the Department of Defense School System.

After 3 ½ years abroad, I came back to the US, and spent the next year writing my dissertation and completing the Ph.D. In England, I had come across the work of Basil Bernstein on language and cultural reproduction in a reader by Karabel and Halsey called *Power and Ideology in Education*. This book provided many new insights into my high school teaching experiences. Reading about and teaching courses in the sociology of education to a largely military population reinforced the importance culture and class to schooling outcomes. My dissertation looked at Bernstein's work, and tried to locate his research among other traditions, and explain why his work had been a lighting rod for attention and criticism from both the left and right. My strategy for completing my dissertation was to write something every day. I got some adjunct work to support myself, and over the course of a year, I was able to complete my dissertation and degree.

First job and first academic appointment. After finishing my degree, I got a soft money job at a research and evaluation center that was directed by a member of my doctoral committee, at a new campus of the University of Maryland, UMBC. The director of the Center had written a couple books on school test scores and hired me to be a research associate. I did post-doctoral studies in research and evaluation, taught an undergraduate class or two, and completed an evaluation study on honors programs at the University. I took statistics courses, learned how to analyze and process data on punch cards using statistical analysis packages. I also began to reading on testing and evaluation.

In the summer of 1981, after about nine months on the job, I applied and was interviewed for a position at Northern Arizona University. I remember them telling me that I was the only person that was going to be interviewed for the job and I was kind of shocked. I remember flying in wearing an alligator shirt and going directly from the airport to my first steak fry. They all laughed about the city kid, coming to his first steak fry. But everyone friendly, and I accepted a position as assistant professor in the

Educational Administration department teaching courses in the sociology of education and research methods.

Connections: Family Life and Real-World Experience to Professional Life

Marriage and Family. I met my wife in Sedona, AZ and we dated about a year and then got married. We probably would have gotten married sooner, on a trip to Las Vegas, but we got caught in a blizzard and the Interstate was closed. So we waited until that summer. I bought a house for us to live in, and we got married in the front yard. The whole College of Education came to the wedding and the best man was the dog with a bow on his chest. My wife had a son, who was seven at the time, and I suddenly became a dad. I don't think Dillon really liked having me as his dad right off the bat, but he learned to tolerate me and I loved him. About a year after that, we had our first daughter, Sidney, and this began what we sometimes call the "roller coaster ride" when you simply hold on and hope the ride stops soon.

Sidney was born in Flagstaff, and it seemed like the birth happened kind of fast. I remember the doctor saying "she has a beautiful head." She did not seem to thrive right away, but her APGAR scores were good. We asked a pediatrician to look her over. After a day in the hospital, and a little extra oxygen, Sidney was released and we took her home. No one told us that there was anything wrong with her and she looked fine; but she wasn't. She just never grew, she never developed, she never did anything. My wife and worried that at six months, the baby should be crawling or sitting or doing something. But we read and were told that all babies develop differently. At around six months, the pediatrician doctor told us that Sidney's head was not growing and there was an operation to put a shunt to keep the skull from prematurely fusing. He told us that they only did this operation at the University Medical Center in Tucson. So, we drove down to Tucson, expecting that Sidney would have surgery.

The first doctor we saw in Tucson looked at our daughter and basically said, "Im sorry but your baby doesn't need an operation. She is not going to be able to do anything, ever! She'll never see, hear, speak, walk, talk; we'll take her from you now if you want, you know and that'll be the end of it." After leaving the doctor's office, I remember sitting in the car telling my wife, "Well, he lied. Nobody would tell you that. They're trying to steal our baby." But, he really wasn't lying and after subsequent testing and many doctors' visits, we came to understand that Sidney was basically born with out a brain. That's why her head was so small.

At this same time, we were trying to have another child, and at the Tucson hospital, my wife had a blood test to see if she was pregnant. We decided that if she was, she would end the pregnancy. But after the blood test, they told us that she wasn't pregnant and we were somewhat relieved. The second baby was born just about nine months later, Talya Gili Danzig. We are sure that the hospital lied to us, possibly because they recognized that we really weren't in the state of mind to handle the news.

Giving Bad News. Early on in this pregnancy, the doctor did an ultrasound on my wife. Caring for Sidney was an ongoing ordeal and we had expressed our concerns and fears. Although there was no genetic syndrome associated with Sidney's condition, the doctors had told us that we had a one in four chance of this happening again in a subsequent pregnancy. My wife and I were still in the examining room, and heard our doctor telling his younger partner "No, you have to go tell them," and the younger doctor's seeming reluctance. Our obstetrician told him "No, that's your job, to go and tell them that the baby's head is a little small and that they need to go for more tests." A long two weeks later, we drove down to Phoenix for the Stage Two sonogram. We had an old Jeep Wagoneer, with lot of miles, but we drove it down to get sophisticated test completed. A mile or so from the doctor's office, the Jeep broke down; steam all over, a broken hose. They fixed it at *Jake's Garage* and we were about a half an hour late. After doing the test, the doctor told us that our baby was "absolutely perfect, you know, she's great." I wanted to know more, why did they send us for the test? How id he know more than the doctors in Flagstaff? And he told us, "No, they're sent you to me because I'm the expert and I have better equipment, and she's absolutely perfect." And we told ourselves that if something bad was going happen that day, the car took the brunt of it; Talya was born without a hitch. She was the smartest, brightest, most delightful child that you ever want to meet. Maybe because it was compared to Sidney, but she seemed to be learning at lighting speed, and every day was a delight in watching how the new things that she could do – eat, roll, crawl, babble, talk, etc.

Putting on Mirrors. We bought a double stroller so that the girls almost looked liked twins. On line at the supermarket checkout, Sidney was always the "sleepy twin." She was always dressed in pretty clothes and wore a hat to cover her head. We let her hair grow long. She was small in stature (probably because she couldn't swallow or eat) and appeared to be a baby, especially in the stroller with her younger sister. We bought sunglasses for her and people sometimes thought she was blind. So they would speak louder. But we learned quickly how others would view Sidney, so that she appeared, at least at a casual glance, to be normal.

A few years later my wife's great-aunt died, and we got a totally unexpected check for a few thousand dollars in the mail. And we thought, well, we can use the money to buy a piano or have another baby. So that night we said, "let's have a baby." The next morning we said, "Well, no, that was a big mistake. Let's get a piano." But it was too late and our last daughter, Dasi Gabrielle was conceived that night. And nine months later, we had another beautiful baby girl, who I held in my arms the moment she was born. And for the next few years, Sidney had another sister to keep her company in that double stroller. On Valentine's Day, about a month before Dasi was born, I had a vasectomy.

During these early years of family life, my wife basically gave up her life to raise the children. Sidney was basically joined at the hip to my wife. Eating was the greatest challenge because Sidney couldn't chew and could barely swallow without choking. Sidney's meals were blended into a kind saucy mush and it took hours to feed her, spooning small bites just to get a little sustenance into her. One meal would blend into

the next as Sidney took hours to eat even the smallest meal. Sidney was also in chronic pain; she would go through 72 hours periods just crying for no clear reason -- possibly hunger, stomach cramps, or constipation, no one ever knew for sure why, but one of us would stay up her all the time. First Talya, then Dasi slept in our bed as we had little energy left to spend with another baby. We would watch in amazement as they did things from birth, that Sidney couldn't do, even at 3, 4, or 5 years of age. Providing for the daily living needs for a total care child, with no independent skills is an exhausting experience, with no end in sight.

Problems with social services and other service providers. Our experiences getting with Social Services were miserable. Social Services assigned a case manager who told us that would provide assistance for caring for a total care child, but the reality was that services were never available, or so flawed that using the services cost more energy than the help provided. As Sidney became older, and bigger, we requested assistance for adult diapers for Sidney – partly for comfort and partly for expense. In politically correct Flagstaff, this request translated into 12 recyclable diapers, from some local company. We save up for a new living room rug and on home visit, the social worker commented on how beautiful the rug looked and could we really afford it. On rare occasions, we requested a baby sitter so we could go to birthday dinner or a movie. The respite providers would ask if it was ok to bring another child or children that they were caring for to the house. If we said no, then sorry, they were not available. When we said ok, one or two additional children would come to the house, and we would leave hearts in our throats, worried that anyone could care for so many young and needy children. Social services provided a list of people to clean our house, and my wife's jewelry was stolen that week; another provider would bring her disabled husband with her to keep an eye on him and my wife wound up caring for Sidney and the cleaning people. A seemingly kindly neighbor, with a down-syndrome child of her own, befriended my wife. She neglected to tell us that she was being paid by Social Services to meet with other mothers. As Sidney reached preschool age, a local Montessori pre-school accepted Sidney but wanted an aide and extra tuition to cover her care. Social services balked at the extra costs and recommended a local church preschool on the other side of town. The university where I was a professor had an integrated pre-school, but the Director and teacher said that feeding Sidney was not part of the program. For us, making sure that Sidney was fed, was the primary need. Learning the names of colors getting along with others, or being mainstreamed were far down the list. Getting Sidney up and dressed for school, without having her fed at least one meal, expended more time and energy than either of us had. Sidney lasted about 3 weeks at that school. After that, it was easier to keep her at home. When Sidney's doctor suggested a feeding tube, we jumped at the chance. At least Sidney would not starve to death. Her projectile vomit was a certain clue let others know she had been fed too quickly or too much.

There were also some great people who helped us. The public schools accepted Sidney a year early, into their class for profoundly handicapped children, and this was the first time we met with professionals who understood the magnitude of the effort required providing for the daily needs of a total care child. Three consecutive summers we attended the Foundation for Blind Children's family camp in Malibu. We spent the week

at camp, eating camp food, bonding with other parents, and having a little respite while others provided the bulk of care for Sidney. On the road trips to California we would stop at local diners we would order meals and ask them to put Sidney's hamburger or sandwich in the blender with a little juice. The waitresses took our orders without a question or glance. One summer, we took all three girls on a trip to Cabo San Lucas, Mexico and simply acted like nothing was unusual as we brought our own blender and tube fed Sidney. People must have thought we were doctors as they came to our room and asked for our help when someone at the hotel slipped on wet flagstone and was knocked unconscious. My wife looked at the woman, said she probably had a concussion, and recommended that she go to the hospital to be checked out. Everyone smiled in appreciation of the diagnosis. We took Sidney wherever we went -- boat rides, sandy beaches, tours, etc. It was a little like the movie *Weekend at Bernie's*. Only one cab driver, looking at her through his rear view mirror, panicked and took us to the local doctor's office instead of the restaurant we requested. He seemed relieved to have us out of his cab.

When Sidney was about eight, we realized that we couldn't take care of her anymore, and have any kind of life outside of caring for her. Even with the tube feedings, Sidney weighed around 30 pounds. We looked around for a residential placement and after visiting a facility in Phoenix, decided that they could take of Sidney. When you walk into a facility that provides for total care children, there is a sadness that you feel, that many children are profoundly disabled. But this has nothing to do with the more fundamental criteria for evaluating a place, such as the ratio of care provider's to children, 24 hour access for parents, and openness of the environment. Sidney's caseworker told us that the facility was a warehouse for children. We appealed to the supervisor and received approval to bring Sidney down there. So we packed up Sidney's clothes and toys and prepared for this new event in Sidney's care.

When we arrived at the facility, the admission's people said that the Social Services had reversed their decision and that her placement decision had been rescinded. It was a terrible moment. I said, "Well, that's just not right." Now, were in a crisis. The whole family, our son, our other two daughters, and Sidney, had come to bring Sidney's to her new home. I called the governor's office and asked to speak with the governor, but no luck. I had a colleague at the University who was a state legislator, and I called him at his legislative office. They said he was in a meeting and I said it was a crisis and an emergency. So they interrupted him, in the middle of a meeting, and I explained to him what had happened. And he said, "Well, let me get the head of the State Agency, in charge of Social Services, on the phone. In a few minutes he called back and we had a three-way phone call with her and with him and with me. I told him what I was told and who had told me. The Agency Director explained that the decision had been reversed at the highest level because the agency had adopted an anti-institutional policy, and that every child should be maintained in the home." The legislator proposed that Sidney be given 30 days, to provide time for me to appeal the decision, which rejected her placement.

And so, Sidney got to stay and I will be eternally grateful to our state legislator for helping us. During the next 30 days, we appealed the rejection from the State. The State argued that it was not their responsibility to provide optimal care and that Sidney's needs could be met in many other less expensive placements, including foster care. We argued that in theory, one could do heart surgery on the dining room table and that you could do anything in one's house. But it was not practical and the quality of life of all involved in providing the care would be impacted. We lost our appeal! However, in the 30-day interim, our private insurance stepped in and agreed to pay for her care in the residential facility. And for the past 10 years, with the exception of three years, when we moved to Colorado and brought Sidney to a care facility there, Sidney has lived in this same residential facility in Phoenix. For ten years, we have worked with the same care providers and they continue to take remarkable care of her. Significantly, they are equipped to provide for the level of care Sidney requires.

Educational Administration and Leadership Studies

My professional responsibilities as a college professor continued during this time. I was still teaching courses in the sociology of education and research methods. My real world experiences raising a family, and the difficulties parents' face accessing and using educational, medical, legal, and social services, dominated my thinking and writing. I wrote an article titled "Parents Versus Professionals" in a small Corwin Press journal titled *People and Education*, which tried to examine the importance of social class (and cultural capital) in articulating and getting help from state social service providers. After focusing on Sidney's care for eight years, and having two other daughters, I found myself with an adolescent son that hadn't received a lot of attention during the previous eight years, and whose own problems came to the surface. Dillon was sixteen, rebellious, and in trouble. His problems just zoomed into the space that Sidney's leaving left open. He struggled with school and with authority. He was a hands-on type of child, a great baritone sax player but did poorly in academics. When he was selected for All-State band, he wasn't allowed to participate because of Arizona's "no pass-no play" legislation. I remember pleading with the principal of his high school, finally telling her in exasperation, "Twenty years from now he's not going to remember that he got a F in his math class. He's going to remember that you're the SOB who kept him from being a lead soloist in the All-State band." And she said, "I don't care, Mr. Danzig. You know, he's not going to play, he didn't earn it." In the end, Dillon dropped out of high school, a credit or two short of graduation. When we moved to Phoenix to be closer to Sidney, he headed to California to stay with his Grandfather. I'm not sure he really ever had a childhood; there were so many crises. But, he's grown into a wonderful young man and we continue to build bridges and mend fences.

With four children, one of whom being a total-care child, my wife and I participated in hundreds of conversations, meetings, and hearings to determine services, programs, costs, payer and payee options, and consequences. The experience taught me there are many good-hearted people in all these organizations. Unfortunately, personal preferences, professional socialization, and organizational hierarchy lead to many situations where the ball is dropped; all too often, the quality of decision-making is poor,

and the range of possible solutions prematurely limited. Too often, the interests of those with least power often go unarticulated and too often are given the least credence. Even the views of well educated and professional parents, are routinely discounted or dismissed. Families with fewer resources, intellectual and financial, face even greater challenge confronting institutional mandates and mindsets.

I also have come to value a more pragmatic view of decision-making, how to commit to decisions at particular points in time or settings, when there is no right answer. Every decision is contingent on other factors, usually out of the control of the decision maker. Professional socialization and institutional limitations constrain actions taken, even to the detriment of the child or family. For a parent, doing nothing is the wrong response because it sends a message that nothing can be done, and the situation is hopeless. Sometimes, you have to do what you know is wrong in order to justify trying something different, moving in a new direction. For a parent, this is very frustrating. The people that helped us the most were those who adopted a more pragmatic view of helping children and families rather than committing to a set of abstract principles, no matter how morally correct they perceived it to be. I came to see leaders as people who had the courage to make decisions to help others, even when there was not enough information to know what to do, even when the decision went against their personal view of the world.

Leadership and policy studies at the Arizona Department of Education. Services for a disabled child are less available in a small town than a metropolitan area. I took a leave of absence form NAU in 1996 and accepted a position with the Arizona Department of Education in Phoenix. I took a position as the Director of the Educational Information Center, which soon became the research and policy division at the Department, and began to research and write about school issues from a state perspective. I already had a strong parent perspective, and the contrast between the state education policy perspective and a personal parent perspective was good. It also placed me in more of a leadership position to be able to better understand the multiple relationships between a state agency and local school and school districts in the state. The state interacts with school districts in many different ways, some seen as helpful and other times seen as more paternalistic. The smaller districts rely on the state for lots of things – interpretations of rules, curriculum and testing, certification, etc. These districts do not have their own research departments and rely on the state for access to information. While at the Department, I participated in the development of new education policies related to curriculum, alternative certification; we also completed research studies and projects related to curriculum and censorship in Arizona schools, consolidation at five rural school districts, and teacher testing. I also headed up the teacher testing unit within the Department which completed all of the testing for new teachers in the state. One of the things that I felt very strongly about was the importance of sharing information. We developed multiple databases of testing information which we would make available. I developed an Education Policy Brief, *INFOspective*, which tried to present topics of interests to Arizona educators with some combination of data and perspective. One policy brief looked at emergency certification and the district's requests for Alternative Certification. Another issue looked at some of the national reports such as the Carnegie Foundation Report on Teaching and tried to characterize the importance of the report for

the profession. One of the difficult parts of working for the state was that the political agenda of the Superintendent (and need to get elected) often took priority over a college professor's training which was to present information and to understand the different spins politicians put on the numbers. This made the Department of Education a hard place to work, because everything was politically charged environment and the Superintendent was the 5th highest ranking elected official in the state. The previous Superintendent had used her experience as a springboard for running for senator, then governor of the state. Members of the State Board of Education also had political aspirations, so the environment was always politically charged.

Balancing Work and Family Life: After a few years at the Department, I returned to NAU, then ASU West, and finally went to head the Educational Administration program at Colorado State University. Colorado State was an example of a university that was trying to recreate itself; it had been an Agricultural University (Land Grant institution in Colorado) and as new agriculture developed, it recruited a world class group of scientists, related to Agriculture. There was also a Veterinary college at the University, with a nationally recruited faculty. In education, the school of education had merged with a school of vocational education and was still trying to define its mission: training teachers and administrators, training vocational teachers, doing research and grants. Because of its Land Grant status, it had a much stronger commitment to bringing in grant monies than I had experienced in my prior experience at Northern Arizona U.

At Arizona State University West, and later at Colorado State, I continued developing a commitment to teaching education courses on leadership and working on leadership stories. I received a small grant from the Colorado Commission on Higher Education to work on stories related to standards. I also did some evaluation research for the Colorado School-to-Career Grant which included case studies of local school districts and the leadership required to bring these initiatives off the ground.

Connections to leadership: Learning to value. People in leadership positions are required to make decisions, which are inevitably informed by their own experiences. I have had to make many personal and professional decisions -- to apply for a job, to move the family, or to place my daughter in a residential care setting -- these decisions are all based on how to prioritize view of what is important. As a husband and father, balancing work and family has been a significant challenge to me. I've tried to make decisions that are in the best interest of keeping the family together. If when we had to split up, then find a place where our children would be safe, and then find a way to get them assistance with what they need.

One final example concerns problems faced in bringing our daughter to Colorado, which proved to be more difficult that anticipated. When we got to Colorado, we began by asking the state for assistance in finding a residential placement for Sidney. We visited a group home run by two seemingly friendly men, with three other ambulatory adult men who resided there. The state was willing to put place a totally helpless 11-year-old girl and to fix up the garage as her bedroom. I told that caseworker "absolutely no, that this was not a safe place for a child." And I was furious. I asked her how could

she make such a recommendation? When pressed she told me that she also had a job to do, and I told her, "If I had your job, I would kill myself." And she wrote down a note that I had a personality disorder. But, I was angry with this woman and her willingness to place my daughter in harm's way.

Next, we decided that we would try and place our daughter in a local nursing home and wound up having to sue the state to get permission to do so. We found a local nursing home and asked if they would accept our daughter if we paid for her care there. We got all the way to the point of actually bringing her there, until they said that they had changed their minds and that they couldn't accommodate her there. I am sure that they were pressured by the local social service agency. So, we found a second nursing home, which agreed to accept Sidney but told us, "you have to have a federal identification number for your daughter because anybody in a nursing home has to have the required number." When we asked how to get one, we were told by the state agency which oversaw the testing that "we won't test your daughter for eligibility because she doesn't belong in a nursing home. She's not an old person." I said that, "since the state wasn't paying the bill, it wasn't their decision. I also explained allowing her into a local nursing home would mean being reunited with her family; Sidney would even attend the same school as her two sisters. She'll go to classes with them. Yes, she'll live at a nursing home with old people, but nursing homes are equipped to work non-ambulatory people." Again, we were told absolutely not. "No, we will not give your daughter the required federal identification number under any circumstance." So, we had to find an attorney. We found a conservative attorney who had a good reputation for problem solving who was more than happy to than happy to fight the establishment, which refused to allow parents to bring their daughter to Colorado. We sued the Attorney General of the State of Colorado for, first refusing to test Sidney for eligibility, and when she qualified under federal criteria, for refusing to issue the required Federal ID number for placement in the nursing home. It took a year, but we won that case and we were able to bring Sidney to Colorado, where she lived in a nursing home, and went to school with our other daughters.

It only lasted for eighteen months. While the same company that I had had in Arizona administered our health insurance, it was a self-funded by the University. When it came time to make the insurance switch to Colorado, the University refused coverage, saying her care was custodial and not medical. After losing an appeal, I felt it was more important to keep Sidney's coverage that paid for her nursing care. The cost of care was more than my salary and my wife's salary combined. So on New Year's Day, 1999, I took Sidney back to Arizona, to live at Hacienda paid for by my Arizona insurance purchased through COBRA. I told the family that we should also prepare to move back to Phoenix. Five months later, with no jobs and two pre-teenage daughters, we moved back to Phoenix. I was hoping to continue teaching at Colorado State by teaching on-line courses and commuting. But the director of the School of Education saw no connection between my family life, insurance needs, and Colorado State's rejection of my insurance claim. So in the end, I resigned and looked for work in Phoenix. I consulted, worked for Northern Arizona University, and then finally accepted a faculty position at Arizona State University.

Final Consensus Exercise Among the Administrative Team Concerning the Meaning and Relevance of Story-Based Professional Development

We returned to the district the following year, to share with the participants a draft copy of our paper that we planned on presenting at this symposium. We presented copies of the draft (without the stories) to the leadership team, and asked for written permission to include their stories in the final draft of this paper (see Appendix B). We also asked three questions of the group concerning their ratings of the paper and their experience using narrative and story as a component of professional development.

The first question we asked the group concerned whether the paper was an accurate representation of the work that we had done with them during the year. The question we asked was:

Is the paper a fair representation of the scope of work that we accomplished during the 2000-2001 school year? Their responses are presented in Figure 1.

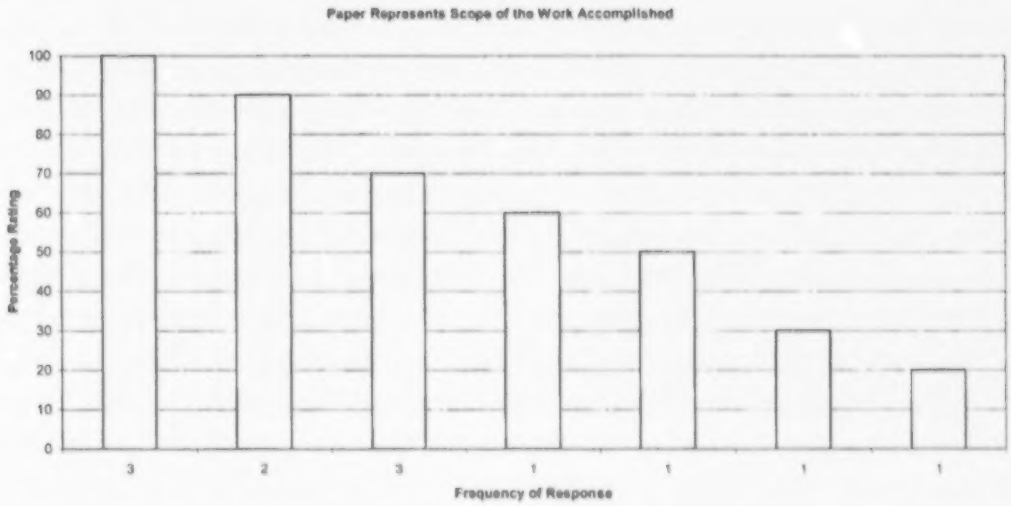

Figure 1: Leadership team response to the question concerning how well the paper represented the professional development work accomplished during the 2000-2001 school year.

Question two asked the group "What was the benefit of the work to you personally and professionally?"

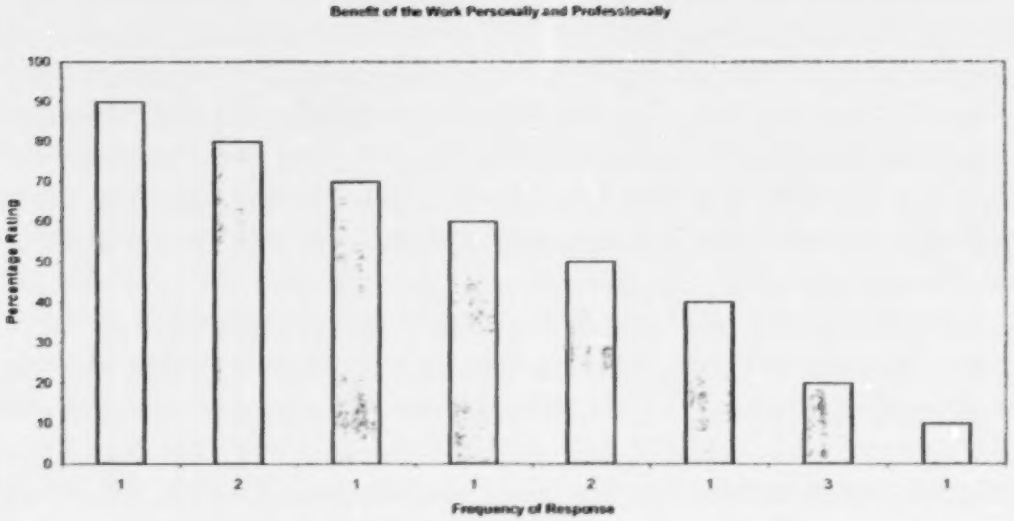

Figure 2: Leadership team response to the question of benefit of the professional development experiences personally and professionally.

The last question asked participants to rate the benefit of the professional development experience to the organization. The question asked was: "What was the benefit of the work to the organization?"

Figure 3: Leadership team response to the question of benefit of the professional development experiences personally and professionally.

The data indicate that the written presentation in this paper was a fair representation of events that occurred during the yearlong professional development experience in the eyes of participants (rated at about 80% by participants for question #1). Questions #2 and #3 indicate a less positive attribution to the value of the professional development experience (rated at about 50% for questions #2 and #3). On question #3 for example, only six participants rated the "benefit of the professional development experiences personally or professional" at 70% or higher. There was not much difference between the responses to the two questions concerning benefit to participants personally/professional (#2) and benefit to the organization (#3) with both questions averaging at about 50%.

In the highly politicized climate of the school district, surviving district politics is the primary priority; it is not surprising that the perceived benefit of professional development was undervalued. The importance of professional development (expressive value) among the leadership team and the practical benefit of professional development to organizational recognition and success (instrumental value) need to go hand-in-hand. When there is a mismatch between the two, there is less reason for school administrators to buy-in and less value placed on participation by the organization. This outcome is supported by a recent newspaper article (Flannery, April 17, 2002), which reported that the District will "make all its administrators reapply for their jobs" (p. B3). In retrospect,

it would have been interesting to ask a separate question concerning the narrative and story writing experience as distinct from other efforts accomplished during the year.

The findings also indicate the group's willingness to provide both positive and critical feedback, in an open and face-to-face setting. We interpret the willingness of the group to provide feedback, as a reflection of how safe our sessions had become and a positive indication of the professional growth that had occurred during the year.

Some Preliminary Hunches about Story-Based Professional Development for School Administrators

It is clear from the year-long effort that writing, and sharing stories provides opportunities for a leadership team to discuss: (1) the power of personal biography; (2) multiple perspectives people bring to the workplace; (3) the language of organizational hierarchy; (4) expert processes in situations with limited knowledge and ambiguous problems; (5) mapping the formal and informal organization to anticipate potential hazards and separate relevant details; and (6) analyzing cases of organizational learning which demonstrate an awareness of the multiple ways that children and adults learn in organized school settings. It is also clear that administrators need a safe harbor, away from the politics and conflicting demands of district and schools. Such a setting would allow school administrators to discuss and reflect upon issues of concern and problems of practice and. While the story-based professional development allowed some opportunities for open discussion, it was not an entirely safe environment to discuss many of the very issues needing attention. One goal of professional development, along with coaching and mentoring, would be to develop such a safe harbor for school administrators to turn for help.

A second understanding that comes from the stories and story discussions is a need for administrators to develop some sort of critical event review. Particularly with regard for serious situations, there is need to review what the problem was, what actions were taken, how effective these actions were, and what might be done to improve performance, assuming the possibilities of subsequent occurrences. In this sense, the stories also serve as case studies of administrative actions or performances and allowed for non-threatening discussions of prior administrative behaviors and actions.

The stories model how knowledge is constructed and communicated and the participants developed a clearer understanding of how other administrators talk about and approach problems in ways similar or different ways to their own ways. Crafting and then reflecting on stories helped school leaders develop a more expert understanding of how they learn and how knowledge is shared.

Does story-based professional development make someone a more effective leader? While our experience doesn't provide a yes or no answer, it does provide directions to pursue in finding an answer to this question. If professionals are expected to learn from experience, they must learn ways to capture and reflect on these experiences. Learning from prior experience requires discussion and reflection, of what happened, what it meant, and what to do about it in the future. This learning is not necessarily come from breaking down into a set of component parts. Practitioners must also learn to recognize how actions are connected to cultural norms, to initial experiences growing up, to institutional histories, and to professional socialization on the job. Leadership is learning to tell one's story in a way that is understandable to others and learning that there are other stories that are equally powerful determinants of actions.

References

Alvarez, R. L. (2001). Classification of principal mobility factors in three inner city elementary school districts in Phoenix, Arizona (Doctoral dissertation, Northern Arizona University, 2001). *Dissertation Abstracts International, 61-10A, 3831.*

Barone, T. (1997). Among the chosen: A collaborative educational (auto)biography. *Qualitative Inquiry, 3* (2), 222-236.

Barone, T. (2001). *Touching eternity: The enduring outcomes of teaching.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Bennis, W. (1994). *On becoming a leader.* Reading, MA: Perseus Books.

Bennis, W. (2000). The leader as storyteller. In W. Bennis, *Managing the dream: Reflections on leadership and change* (pp. 273-282). Cambridge, MA: Perseus Publishing.

Berlak, A., and Berlak, H. (1981). *Dilemmas of schooling: Teaching and social change. London: Methuen.*

Bruner, J. (1996). *The culture of education.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bolman, L.G., & Deal, T.E. (1991). *Reframing organizations: artistry, choice, and leadership.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Bolman, L. G. & Deal, T. E. (1992). Leading and managing: Effects of context, culture, and gender. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 28, 314-329.

Bolman, L. and Deal, T. (1993). *The path to school leadership.* Newbury Park, CA: Corwin Press.

Casey, K. (1995). The new narrative research in education. *Review of Research in Education, 2*, 211-254.

Clandinin, J., & Connelly, F. M. (1991). Narrative and story in practice and research. In D. Schön (Ed.), *The reflective turn* (pp. 257-282). New York: Teachers College Press.

Clark, D., Astuto, T., Foster, W., Gaynor, A., & Hart, A. (1994). Domain II: Organizational studies, taxonomy and overview. In W. Hoy (Ed.), *Educational administration: The UCEA document base*. Cherry Hill, NJ: McGraw-Hill Primus.

Coles, R. (1989). *The call of stories*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Cooper, J. (1995). The role of narrative and dialogue in constructivist leadership. In L. Lambert, D. Walker, D. Zimmerman, J. Cooper, M. Lambert, M. Gardner, P.J. Slack (Eds.), *The constructivist leader* (pp. 121-133). New York: Teachers College Press.

Czarnaiawska, B. (1997). *Narrating the organization: Dramas of institutional identity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Danzig, A. (1999a). How might leadership be taught? The use of story and narrative to teach leadership. *International Journal of Leadership in Education: Theory and Practice*, 2 (2), 117-131.

Danzig, A. (1999b). The contribution of stories to leadership development. *International Studies in Educational Administration 27* (1), 11-19.

Danzig, A. (1997a). Leadership stories: What novices learn by crafting the stories of experienced administrators. *Journal of Educational Administration, 35* (2), 122-137.

Danzig, A. (1997b). Building leadership capacity through narrative. *Educational Leadership and Administration, 9*, 49-59.

Danzig, A. with the assistance of D. Beckel, L. Harrison, B. Marsh, K. Rolle, S. Rossow, N. Sebring, B. Spaulding, and M. Treviño. (1996). *Educational Leadership Stories with implications for a Standards-Based Education System: Report to the Colorado Commission on Higher Education.* ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED401615)

Danzig, A., & Harris, K. (1996). Building competence by writing and reflecting on stories of practice. *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation, 7* (2), 193-204.

De Pree M. (1989). *Leadership is an art.* New York: Dell.

De Pree M. (1993). *Leadership jazz.* New York: Dell.

English, F.W., (1995). Toward a reconsideration of biography and other forms of life writing as a focus for teaching educational administration. *Educational Administration Quarterly; 31* (2) 202-23.

Etzioni, A. (1975). *A comparative analysis of complex organizations: on power, involvement, and their correlates* (Revised and enlarged edition). New York: Free Press.

Flannery, P. (2002, April 17). County schools hit by funds shortfall: Officals asked to reapply for jobs. *The Arizona Republic*, p. B3.

Gardner, H. (1995). *Leading minds: An anatomy of leadership.* NY, NY: Basic Books.

Goodson, I. (1995). The story so far: Personal knowledge and the political. In J. Hatch & R. Wisniewski (Eds.), *Life history and narrative* (pp. 89- 98). London: Falmer Press.

Jaworski, J. (1996). *Synchronicity : the inner path of leadership*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.

Johnson, M. (1992). *Redefining leadership: A case study of Hollibrook Elementary School.* University of Illinois at Urbana-Champagne, Urbana, IL: National Center for School Leadership. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED360687

Oakes, J., Quartz, K.H., Ryan, S., & Lipton, M. (2000). *Becoming good American schools: The struggle for civic virtue in education reform*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Polkinghorne, D. (1995). Narrative configuration in qualitative analysis. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 1995, 8 (1), 5-24.

Riessman, C. (1993*). Narrative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Slater, R., & C. Teddlie (1992). Towards a theory of school effectiveness and leadership. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement, 3* (4), pp. 242-257.

Senge, P. (1990, Fall). The leader's new work: Building learning organizations. *Sloan Management Review*, pp. 7-23.

Senge, P., Kleiner, A., Roberts, C., Ross, R. Roth, G., Smith, B. (1999). *The dance of change*. Doubleday: NY, NY.

Schön, D. (Ed.). (1991). *The reflective turn: Case studies in and on educational practice.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Shulman, J. and Mesa-Bains, A (1993). *Diversity in the classroom: A casebook for teachers and teacher educators.* Philadelphia: Research for Better Schools & Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Stake, R.E. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Thousand Oakes, CA: Sage.

Weick, K. (1979). *The social psychology of organization. (*2nd edition*)*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Welch, J. (1998). *Jack Welch speaks: wisdom from the world's greatest business leader* [compiled by Janet C. Lowe]. New York : J. Wiley & Sons.

Wortham, S. (2001). *Narratives in action: A strategy for research and analysis.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Appendix A – Story Writing Assignment

Appendix B: Consent Letter

Dear _____:

We are asking permission to use your story of your personal and educational experiences, as well as experiences as a school administrator. The story was based on your participation in professional development meetings and required you to be interviewed and audio-taped. Based on these interviews, a story of your experience was crafted. The tapes of these conversations will be erased at the completion of the study.

Your participation is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from participation, there will be no penalty. It will not affect you in any way. The results of the research may be published but your name will not be used without your permission.

Although there may be no direct benefit to you, you will have the opportunity to share your personal and professional experiences with others. Another possible benefit of your participation is the opportunity to share your expertise and insights about educational administration with others in the education system.

If you have any questions concerning your participation, please call Dr. Danzig at (480) 727-7726 or Dr. William Wright at (602) 728-9518.

Sincerely,

Arnold Danzig

I give consent to use my narrative/story as part of a research paper.

_____ Yes _____ No

I also give permission for my name to be used in published papers.

_____ Yes _____ No

_____ _____

Signature Date

If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board, through Karol Householder at (480) 965- 4796

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

ERIC

TM034542

REPRODUCTION RELEASE

(Specific Document)

I. DOCUMENT IDENTIFICATION:

Title: Science Versus Service: Narrative and Story-Based Professional Development with School Administrators at a County Regional School District	
Author(s): Arnold Danzig and William Wright	
Corporate Source:	Publication Date:

II. REPRODUCTION RELEASE:

In order to disseminate as widely as possible timely and significant materials of interest to the educational community, documents announced in the monthly abstract journal of the ERIC system, *Resources in Education* (RIE), are usually made available to users in microfiche, reproduced paper copy, and electronic media, and sold through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). Credit is given to the source of each document, and, if reproduction release is granted, one of the following notices is affixed to the document.

If permission is granted to reproduce and disseminate the identified document, please CHECK ONE of the following three options and sign at the bottom of the page.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 1 documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

Level 1

[X]

Check here for Level 1 release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche or other ERIC archival media (e.g., electronic) and paper copy.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2A documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE, AND IN ELECTRONIC MEDIA FOR ERIC COLLECTION SUBSCRIBERS ONLY, HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

2A

Level 2A

[ ]

Check here for Level 2A release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche and in electronic media for ERIC archival collection subscribers only

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2B documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

2B

Level 2B

[ ]

Check here for Level 2B release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche only

Documents will be processed as indicated, provided reproduction quality permits.
If permission to reproduce is granted, but no box is checked, documents will be processed at Level 1.

I hereby grant to the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) nonexclusive permission to reproduce and disseminate this document as indicated above. Reproduction from the ERIC microfiche or electronic media by persons other than ERIC employees and its system contractors requires permission from the copyright holder. Exception is made for non-profit reproduction by libraries and other service agencies to satisfy information needs of educators in response to discrete inquiries.

Sign here, → please

Signature: Arnold Danzig	Printed Name/Position/Title: Arnold Danzig/Associate Professor
Organization/Address: College of Education Arizona State University Tempe, AZ 85287-2411	Telephone: 480/727-7726 FAX: 480/965-1880
	E-Mail Address: adanzig@asu.edu Date: 9/24/02

(over)

III. DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY INFORMATION (FROM NON-ERIC SOURCE):

If permission to reproduce is not granted to ERIC, *or*, if you wish ERIC to cite the availability of the document from another source, please provide the following information regarding the availability of the document. (ERIC will not announce a document unless it is publicly available, and a dependable source can be specified. Contributors should also be aware that ERIC selection criteria are significantly more stringent for documents that cannot be made available through EDRS.)

Publisher/Distributor:
Address:
Price:

IV. REFERRAL OF ERIC TO COPYRIGHT/REPRODUCTION RIGHTS HOLDER:

If the right to grant this reproduction release is held by someone other than the addressee, please provide the appropriate name and address:

Name:
Address:

V. WHERE TO SEND THIS FORM:

Send this form to the following ERIC Clearinghouse:

ERIC CLEARINGHOUSE ON ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND
1129 SHRIVER LAB
COLLEGE PARK, MD 20742-5701
ATTN: ACQUISITIONS

However, if solicited by the ERIC Facility, or if making an unsolicited contribution to ERIC, return this form (and the document being contributed) to:

ERIC Processing and Reference Facility
4483-A Forbes Boulevard
Lanham, Maryland 20706

Telephone: 301-552-4200
Toll Free: 800-799-3742
FAX: 301-552-4700
e-mail: info@ericfac.piccard.csc.com
WWW: http://ericfacility.org

EFF-088 (Rev. 2/2000)